



**BLOOD ON SANTA'S CLAW
AND OTHER STORIES**

**BLOOD ON SANTA'S CLAW,
AND OTHER CHRISTMAS STORIES.**

**BLOOD ON SANTA'S CLAW
By
Alan Terigo.**

CHARACTERS:

DOCTOR: A Time Traveller.
PERI: His companion.
JOE: Pop star from the 80s and Peri's boyfriend.
SANTA: (over speaker)
RUDOLPH: A reindeer.
CORDELIA: A follower of Shakespeare.
IAGO: Another follower of Shakespeare.
WITCH: A witch
RATTY: Animal
TOAD: Animal
MOLE: Animal

SCENE 1: INT. TUNNEL.

(FX: ECHOEY ATMOS.)

SANTA:

(DISTORT) Attention Religions of Naxios. This is inquisitor Claus number Cappa Delta 12. This is a formal notification that you are scheduled for an investigation by CREED. You will submit all paperwork, documents and articles of faith for inspection. Failure to do so will result in instant excommunication. Ho ho ho and out.

(FX: TARDIS MATERIALIATION.)

SCENE 2. TARDIS. INT. DAY.

(FX: TARDIS CONTROL ROOM NOISES.)

JOE:

So where are we?

DOCTOR:

Apparently, the TARDIS has brought us to the planet Naxios, a colony planet. Part of Earth’s old empire.

JOE:

So we’re in the future? How far in the future?

DOCTOR:

Let’s see. You joined us in 1985... This is the 59th century... So four thousand years... give or take a week.

JOE:

Wow. Seriously?

PERI:

Seriously.

JOE:

Wow.

PERI:

You’ll get used to it.

JOE:

Wow.

DOCTOR:

He’ll have to.

PERI:

Doctor!

DOCTOR:

What did I say?

PERI:

You’ve said enough.

DOCTOR:

I don’t visit the 59th century a lot. I know there’s some reason I avoid it. I can’t for the life of me remember why...

JOE:

Hey, perhaps we could go to the year 2525. That would be cool.

DOCTOR:

Mr Carnaby. Are you proposing we should land a year before the Cyber invasion of Earth in the year 2526 and thwart it before it's even been attempted, thus shredding the web of time and imperilling the very fabric of the universe? That is extremely irresponsible. Never ever suggest anything like that ever again.

JOE:

But I...

DOCTOR:

I'm not angry, I'm just disappointed.

JOE:

(UNDER BREATH) I just thought it'd be cool to be in the year 2525. Like that song.

PERI:

(UNDER BREATH) Don't worry about it. He's just being annoying.

(FX: DOCTOR ACTIVATES THE TARDIS DOOR.)

SCENE 3: TUNNEL. INT. DAY.

(FX: EXTERNAL TARDIS DOOR OPENS.)

DOCTOR:

Oh a tunnel, marvellous! Haven’t done one of these in a while. Come on everyone. Let’s see what’s down here.

JOE:

Wait. Guys. Just wait.

PERI:

What’s the matter?

JOE:

I just... Can we just pause a minute.

PERI:

O...kay..

JOE:

Actually, don’t worry about me. I’ll stay here.

PERI:

Are you alright?

JOE:

I’m fine. I’d rather not go down there.

PERI:

Sure. You don’t have to.

DOCTOR:

(COMING BACK) What’s the matter?

PERI:

I think it’s all been a bit too much for Joe. He’s in shock.

JOE:

I am not in shock! I told you. I can do this. I’ve just... Got a thing about tunnels.

DOCTOR:

But that’s what we do Joseph. We explore. We go down tunnels.

JOE:

I just don’t like tunnels, okay? I’ve got a thing about tunnels. Had a bad incident in Wookey Hole while filming a video. I can get over it. Just... not today.

DOCTOR:

Fine. You just stay here and catch your breath. Peri? Are you with me?

PERI:

Sure. (TO JOE) Are you okay?

JOE:

I’m fine. I’ll just sit here for a while. You guys go and have fun.

PERI:

Just take it easy. I’ll be right back.

JOE:

(CALLING) Do good you guys. Overthrow a tyrant. Liberate some oppressed aliens. I’ll be right here.

(FX: THE DOCTOR AND PERI CONTINUE INTO THE TUNNELS. THEIR VOICES GROW ECHOEY.)

DOCTOR:

He’s got a phobia about tunnels.

PERI:

It’s a lot to take in. It’s only what, his third journey in the TARDIS? He’s got culture shock.

DOCTOR:

(DOUBTFULLY) About tunnels.

PERI:

It’s not about the tunnels.

DOCTOR:

Hmm.

PERI:

He’ll be fine.

DOCTOR:

Of course.

PERI:

While we’re here alone, let’s just set down a few ground rules. Firstly, he’s not Joseph or Mr Carnaby. He’s just JOE. Secondly If we meet up with anyone I don’t want you introducing us. As ‘I am known as the Doctor and these are my companions Joe and Peri’.

DOCTOR:

But that’s how I always introduce us.

PERI:

Not any more. If you must say anything, you can say ‘I am known as the Doctor, this is my friend Peri, and this is her partner Joe’.

DOCTOR:

That’s a bit of a mouthful.

PERI:

That’s how it’s going to be. He’s not YOUR companion, he’s MY partner.

DOCTOR:

Point taken. I will attempt to accommodate your sensibilities. (GASPS) My goodness. Look! Look at the walls.

PERI:

How can they glow like that?

DOCTOR:

Let’s find out. Let me find a knife.

(FX: THE DOCTOR RUMMAGES IN A POCKET AND FINDS A KNIFE. HE SCRAPES THE WALL.)

DOCTOR:

Metallic taste. Cadmium? No this is silver. Look along here. And here.

PERI:

Shiny.

DOCTOR:

There’s enough silver here to turn the moon into a pocket watch. And just look at it on my hand.

PERI:

It's moving. Curling around your fingers. Like a living metal.

DOCTOR:

Interesting isn't it?

PERI:

Is it alive?

DOCTOR:

Not living as you understand it. It's just reacting to its surroundings, like when Magnesium bubbles when it's submerged in water. This is fascinating.

SCENE 4: INT. MOUTH OF TUNNEL.

(FX: A SCATTERING OF DISLODGED PEBBLES.)

JOE:

(CALLING) Hello? Doctor? Peri? Babes!

(FX: MORE MOVEMENT. ROCKS)

JOE:

Hello? Is anyone there? (What the hell are)

RATTY:

Who are you?

TOAD:

What are you doing in the mine?

JOE:

I'm just sitting here. Not a crime is it?

TOAD:

It is, actually.

JOE:

Who says?

RATTY:

He doesn't look like one of the Shakespearians. Who do you worship?

JOE:

What?

RATTY:

Who do you worship?

JOE:

Um... I dunno. No one really.

RATTY:

You have to worship something.

JOE:

Um... well... I do worship Marc Bolan?

TOAD:

No Marc Bolan worshippers have settled on Naxios.

RATTY:

No, they're all in the outer planets. (TO JOE) You shouldn't be down here. You should leave.

JOE:

Okay. If you say so.

TOAD

He's leaving already? But we haven't introduced ourselves, Ratty.

RATTY:

Oh my gosh, Toad, you're right. My manners. I am Ratty and this is toad. We are Earth animals.

JOE:

Okay, if you say so. Earth animals in waistcoats and bow ties.

RATTY:

That is what Earth animals wear.

JOE:

None I know, mate. But between you and me, you'd make a bundle as football mascots.

TOAD:

Is he saying we're not proper animals?

JOE:

Well, you're wearing tweeds and can talk. Which is a bit of a giveaway. Most animals I know don't do that.

RATTY:

Just because we used to be human doesn't mean we were human. I was never human. I've always known, deep down, I was a Rat from an early age.

TOAD

We choose to self-identify, and have had corrective surgery so our true selves can emerge.

JOE:

Well... I'm sorry if I offended you.

RATTY:

That's quite alright, old chap.

TOAD:

You can't help being ignorant.

RATTY:

Would you like to have some tea in my cottage?

JOE:

Er... Sure. Why not?

SCENE 5: INT. TUNNEL

DOCTOR:

More silver here... This looks like it's been excavated. You can see pickaxe marks.

PERI:

By hand you mean? Not automated.

(FX: SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENT)

SANTA:

(DISTORT) Attention Religions of Naxios. This is inquisitor Claus number Cappa Delta 12. This is a formal notification that you are scheduled for an investigation by CREED. You will submit all paperwork, documents and articles of faith for inspection. Failure to do so will result in instant excommunication. Ho ho ho and out.

DOCTOR:

CREED? Did he say CREED? Now where have I come across CREED before?

PERI:

Doctor, I don't know what that meant but I don't like it. Let's go back.

DOCTOR:

Must we?

PERI:

Yes! Joe could be in trouble!

DOCTOR:

But this is always the point of our adventure where we go forward, explore deeper.

PERI:

Well not this time.

DOCTOR:

Oh very well. Come on then.

(FX: THEY WALK)

PERI:

You resent him being here, don't you?

DOCTOR:

Of course not! I don't resent him. But...

PERI:

Ah, I knew there would be a 'but'...

DOCTOR:

Peri, I am used to friends joining me on my adventures because they want to be part of the journey, to partake of a little excitement and discovery. But Joe is not travelling with us because of that. He is travelling with us because he wants to be with you. He is your responsibility.

PERI:

I know that. I know he's my responsibility.

DOCTOR:

But that's not how it works. When it comes to the dangers out there in the universe, I take that burden. If anything happens to you I am equipped to take that guilt. I'm not sure you are.

PERI:

Don't worry about me. I'm perfectly capable of..

(FX: THEY STOP WALKING.)

PERI:

He's gone!

DOCTOR:

So he has.

PERI:

We were just gone for a minute, and now he's just wandered off. How could he do that?

DOCTOR:

Now you know how *I* feel.

PERI:

Where could he have got to? (CALLING) Joe! Joe!

DOCTOR:

He's probably hiding behind that rock. Ready to jump out at us and shout 'boo'.

PERI:

That would be childish. (BEAT) I'll go and look behind that rock.

DOCTOR:

(CHUCKLES) Not that he would do anything childish.

(FX: SCRAMBLES UP TO ROCK)

PERI:

Joe? Joe? (GASPS) Doctor!

DOCTOR:

What's wrong?

PERI:

I've found a body!

DOCTOR:

A body?

PERI:

Yes!

DOCTOR:

It's not Joe, is it?

PERI:

It's... I can't believe it.

DOCTOR:

What?

PERI:

It's Santa Claus.

(FX: DOCTOR SCRAMBLES TO JOIN HER.)

DOCTOR:

Oh yes. So it is. Red coat. Boots...

PERI:

What does this mean?

DOCTOR:

It means someone's killed Father Christmas.

PERI:

Father Christmas doesn't exist.

DOCTOR:

Well he certainly doesn't now.

PERI:

Doctor, be serious.

DOCTOR:

It's perfectly possible to be flippant and serious at the same time. (BEAT) Let's have a look. Fake beard, extra padding added to his body. No, he's not the real Father Christmas. But that's not really the point. No matter who he's dressed as, he's been murdered.

PERI:

Do you think this has something to do with that announcement?

DOCTOR

I'm certain of it. I think that was his voice. An automatic recorded announcement. Poor fellow was dead by the time we heard it. Can you see? two marks, either side off his head. Almost circular.

PERI:

There's blood on his hands.

DOCTOR:

Yes, my guess is that he was struck once, he instinctively put his hands to his head to protect himself. Then he was struck again.

PERI:

Doctor. His hands... They're scaley, like a reptile's.

DOCTOR:

Yes, I noticed that. I wonder why.

PERI:

A dead Santa Claus with crocodile hands. Here's me worried about Joe getting culture shock. Where has he got to?

SCENE 6: INT. GALLERY IN TUNNEL.

(FX: CLINK OF CUPS.)

JOE:

Well this is... very nice.

RATTY:

You don't have to be polite, Mr Carnaby. I know when I said tea in my cottage you probably didn't expect a tin of stagnant water in a cave. But you're not catching us at our best. We could have had a picnic by the riverbank

TOAD:

And I could have taken you all for a little run in my Motorcar!

RATTY:

Before THEY came. Now we have to scurry around here..

TOAD:

Like animals.

RATTY:

No, not like animals, Toad. WE are animals.

TOAD:

Oh yes. Sorry.

RATTY:

Apology accepted. Watch your similes in future.

JOE:

Look, you're obviously not in a good way. Your little clothes are all ragged and dirty. I've got a friend who can help you. He's good at that.

PERI:

(IN DISTANCE, CALLING) Joe!

JOE:

Oh. I think they're wondering where I've got to. Come and meet the Doctor. He'll sort you out.

(FX: LONG WAILING SIREN.)

RATTY:

Sorry we can't.

TOAD:

I would leave now, if I were you.

(FX: RATTY AND TOAD SCURRY OFF)

JOE:

Wait. What? (CALLING) Where are you all going?

TOAD:

(CALLING) Rest period is over. We must work in the mines now. Toodle pip!

SCENE 7: INT. TUNNELS.

DOCTOR:

There’s someone coming!

(FX: IAGO AND CORDELIA ARRIVE)

IAGO:

Methinks I heard voices, Cordelia.

CORDELIA:

Yes Iago, I heard them too. Mayhap there are more heretics in the vicinity.

DOCTOR:

Quick Peri, hide!

IAGO:

Zounds, Cordelia, I grow weary.

CORDELIA:

Courage, Iago. This time all will be well.

PERI:

(WHISPER) Look at them! Look how they’re dressed! They’re doing dinner theatre? Down a mine?

IAGO:

But where is good sir Claus? Why has Father Christmas not presented himself?

CORDELIA:

Patience Iago. He will be here. We shall wait.

IAGO:

If this Father Christmas has been slain like the others, I will dip my hands in the blood of his attackers.

PERI:

(WHISPER) They’ll think we killed Santa… They’ll kill us before we can explain…

DOCTOR:

(WHISPER) I’m aware of that!

PERI:

(WHISPER) They’re getting closer…

DOCTOR:

(WHISPER) Yes. They are. Only one thing for it. Give me Santa’s outfit.

PERI:

(WHISPER) What on Earth are you doing?

DOCTOR:

Quickly!

PERI:

You’re going out there as Santa? Are you insane?

DOCTOR:

(WHISPER) Just stay here and stay out of trouble.

(FX: DOCTOR FOOTSTEPS)

DOCTOR:

Ho ho ho. Good tidings to you both. Merry Christmas.

CORDELIA:

Why ‘tis good sir Claus, at last. Welcome to Naxios. I am Cordelia. And this is Iago.

IAGO:

You are late.

DOCTOR:

Am I? Apologies. My sleigh got delayed. My reindeer’s nose developed a fault and we drifted off course.

CORDELIA:

We are much relieved that you are safe, good Christmas.

DOCTOR:

Thank you. Why wouldn’t I be safe?

CORDELIA:

Why... The murders of the other Santas of course.

DOCTOR:

Murders?

IAGO:

Three have been summoned to this planet. You are the third. The other two were set upon shortly after their arrival by a mysterious villain. Struck upon the head.

DOCTOR:

Really? How terrible.

IAGO

But you must know this. We despatched a (report to)

CORDELIA:

We should leave with haste, Iago.

IAGO:

(ALARMED) Wait! Who is behind that rock?

DOCTOR:

It’s er... No one... No one at all.

(FX: PERI SPRINGS FROM BEHIND THE ROCK. THERE IS A SLIGHTLY TINKLING OF BELLS ATTACHED TO HER COSTUME)

PERI:

No-one but me. Just Santa’s faithful Elf Periwig, bringing the luggage.

DOCTOR:

Thank you... Periwig, what would I do without you?

PERI:

Heaven knows.

SCENE 8. INT. BASE.

(THEY ARE WALKING.)

DOCTOR:

(UNDER BREATH) So would you like to enlighten me where your costume came from?

PERI:

(UNDER BREATH) Santa’s sack.

DOCTOR:

(UNDER BREATH) And you thought you’d just...

PERI:

(UNDER BREATH) I know. Call me a genius.

(FX: DOOR)

CORDELIA:

Welcome to Base Dunsin 9, Lord Christmas. Here are your rooms. As you see, we have set aside refreshments for you.

DOCTOR

Oh yes a glass of milk and a mince pie. Very thoughtful.

PERI:

I guess the carrot is for me.

DOCTOR:

So what is actually going on here? Mining? We saw a lot of silver in those caverns.

CORDELIA:

Yes, we are in charge of mining the silver. It is a top government priority. The silver is too tricky to handle for robots. Hence our workforce.

DOCTOR:

And just the two of you run the operation?

CORDELIA:

There are three of us, I am Cordelia, in charge of goodness and fealty. There is Iago, who runs the treachery department... And... the other one. I’m not sure she actually has a name.

(DOOR GLIDES OPEN)

WITCH:

Beware, beware that which is to come. Doom, will befall us all!

CORDELIA:

She is in charge of dire portents.

WITCH:

(AS SHE LEAVES) Naxios will fall in time, when the dark wood comes to the Base of Dunsinane!

CORDELIA:

That's enough.

WITCH:

Beware! Beware!

(FX: DOOR CLOSE)

WITCH:

(MUFFLED THROUGH DOOR) Beware!

CORDELIA:

Now please rest. We know you have a large task ahead of you. We have a heretic next door, who you can torture before you begin your inquisition.

PERI:

Torture?

DOCTOR:

Why would I, Father Christmas, want to torture anyone?

CORDELIA:

Because... That is what Good Sir Claus does to heretics.

(FX. DOOR.)

CORDELIA:

There. Behold the heretic.

DOCTOR:

It's a mole.

PERI:

In a suit.

DOCTOR:

In a cage.

PERI:

A mole in a suit in a cage wearing glasses.

CORDELIA:

As I said. The Heretic. I will leave you to your inquisition. Once the mole has been despatched, I will happily furnish all documentation to you.

(FX: DOOR)

PERI:

What is going on here? She used the word inquisition. Like the old Spanish inquisition. So Santa is Tomas De Torquemada in this century? Is that why that announcement said CREED? You said you recognised it...

DOCTOR:

CREED! Of course! The Conclave for Religious Education, Enforcement and Deification. Now I remember why I avoid going to the 59th century. It is a silly place.

PERI:

So what’s so wrong about the 59th century?

DOCTOR:

The 59th century was a very strange time. Science had taken every miracle and made them commonplace. Resurrection, walking on water, re-incarnation, life from Death. In short, everyone stopped believing. Every major religion collapsed.

PERI:

Some people would say that’s no bad thing.

DOCTOR:

That’s true, but it’s not a black and white issue. But religion underpins a lot of people’s lives and gives them purpose. The Earth government, in its wisdom, decreed that if you believed in something, anything, that was good enough and it was reclassified as a religion. Hey presto, you could remake the Earth as a multi-faith society. At one stroke, belief in nothing became a belief in everything; architecture, gardening, collecting comic books, musical theatre, Football teams, Winston Churchill, Steam Trains,

the books of J.R.R.Tolkien, old television programmes, pop stars...

PERI:

Shakespeare?

DOCTOR:

Exactly. Predictably, Shakespeare worship was one of the first and most successful.

PERI:

So I guess something happened to make it all go wrong.

DOCTOR:

Human nature happened. People are keen on freedom of religion, as long as that freedom doesn't extend to other religions. Intolerance grew like a virus, and the Earth government established CREED, a force to police religious differences.

PERI:

A crack team of psychotic Santas?

DOCTOR:

It's not so odd once you think about it. In this time Santa worship is worldwide, the most powerful sect on Earth.

SCENE 9: INT. OTHER PART OF BASE.**IAGO:**

Good Cordelia, are you not perturbed as to the veracity of Sir Claus? Dost not thou see trickery?

CORDELIA:

I do not, Iago, but then I do not think on such things, for I am young and garbed with virtue, and you are cloaked in vile ambition.

IAGO:

Aye, but is there not virtue in truth? If my trickery bears truth, then you can bear my vileness if truth be in it.

CORDELIA:

Your truth speaks truth, so speak truth to me, iago. Where is this trickery? He wears the red hood, the sable beard, what concerns you, Iago?

IAGO:

His hands, Cordelia. His hands are smooth and pink like the prettiest baby that o’er was nursed.

CORDELIA:

What of it?

IAGO:

Yet it was told to us that he is a pantheist. He worships many things. He gives most of his prayers to Christmas, yet he also carries a belief that the Royal family are space lizards. Did not his personnel file say that one tenth of Sir Claus’ body is scaly, like a lizard? Did that not include his hands?

CORDELIA:

Thou speakest truth, Iago.

IAGO:

Methinks this Santa Claus is a dissembler, a vile imposter. A rat. Dead for a ducat, dead!

SCENE 10. INT. BASE.

DOCTOR:

But it doesn’t explain why I’ve been asked to torture a small defenceless rodent.

PERI:

We could try asking the rodent.

DOCTOR:

Of course. Excuse me?

MOLE:

Yes?

DOCTOR:

Can I ask why you’re in the cage?

MOLE:

I’m a slave. We’re all slaves. Me and all my furry friends. We used to mess around in boats on the river. Now we live in darkness, digging in the mines.

PERI:

That’s awful.

MOLE:

The Shakespearians came to Naxios and made us slaves. They turned up one day and the next day, we got a letter. I think I still have mine in my pocket. Would you like to read it?

PERI:

Sure

(FX: RUSTLE OF PAPER.)

PERI:

(READING) From the Department of Religious Justice. To Mr Mole..

MOLE:

That’s me.

PERI;

(READING) From this date, your faith as it pertains to the planet Naxios in the Naxial system has been downgraded from

a grade A to a grade B. Consider yourself subject to the beliefs and prejudices of any higher faith from this date.

MOLE:

Their belief outranks our belief.

PERI:

Why?

MOLE:

Keep reading.

PERI:

(READING) Under the CREED edict of plurality chapter four, verses two to sixteen it clearly states... That if two religions exist within the same community, the religion that has the greater number of followers can claim precedent over it's faith-based activities and observances. (STOPS READING) So they can put you to work in the mines because there's more of them than there are of you?

MOLE:

That's right. The annoying thing is there are more of us anyway. There are one hundred of us, and only seventy of them. But their religion allows them to count us as only two-thirds of a person. Their sacred Shakespearian texts permits them to persecute us because they say we're inferior.

DOCTOR:

What nonsense! Where in Shakespeare's plays (do they)

MOLE:

It says I'm a vicious mole of nature' that's one quote.

DOCTOR:

Hamlet act two scene one.

MOLE:

'Curse this poisonous bunch backed toad'. That's another.

DOCTOR:

Richard the third, act one, scene three.

MOLE:

He knows his stuff, doesn't he? And there's 'What if my house be troubled with a rat''.

DOCTOR:

The Merchant of Venice, act four, scene one.

MOLE:

That's right. Apparently, there's even an entire play devoted to the taming of a diabolical shrew.

DOCTOR:

Yes, but... But Shakespeare didn't mean literal moles, rats and frogs. They're just metaphors.

MOLE:

Well, yes, there are some that say his work is not to be taken literally. But devout followers of Shakespeare think that's a cop out. (BEAT) Gosh all these questions and no torture. I am lucky. He's a very different kind of Father Christmas, isn't he?

PERI:

I'll let you into a secret. He's not a real Santa.

MOLE:

Of course he's not a real Santa. Because the real ones are all dead. They killed them.

PERI:

They killed them? Who?

MOLE:

Our Friends. They have this plan, you see..

(FX: BLARING ALARM.)

IAGO:

(DISTORT) All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances. Cover all the exits and the entrances and make sure the players on level four do not leave the stage alive.

DOCTOR:

We've been found out.

PERI:

Can you help us get out of here?

MOLE:

Would a gun come in handy?

DOCTOR:

No.

PERI

Yes!

DOCTOR:

Peri...

PERI:

Come on Doctor, how else are we going to escape. Go up the chimney.?

DOCTOR:

Peri, no!

PERI:

Not your decision, doctor. If a gun makes the difference between getting back to the TARDIS and finding Joe, I’m taking it.

DOCTOR:

Fine, but no using it on people. Just wave it about and pretend you *might* use it.

MOLE:

There’s a Shakespearian cannon in that box over there.

(FX: PERI OPENS THE CABINET AND TAKES THE GUN OUT.)

PERI:

Great.

(FX: DOOR OPENS)

DOCTOR:

Come on! Down this way!

(FX; RUNNING ALONG CORRIDORS)

IAGO:

(OFF) Stand, thou blackest villain!

DOCTOR:

Not today, thank you!

(FX: BLASTS – UNDER DIALOGUE)

DOCTOR:

We’re trapped.

PERI:

How does this gun work? There are too many settings!
There’s tragical, comical, historical, pastoral, pastoral-
comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical,
tragical-comical-historical-

MOLE:

Perhaps I can help. Tragical setting sort of explains
itself. Pretty much wipes anything out.

PERI:

Thanks! I’ll try it on that wall.

(FX: BLAST)

DOCTOR

Well done Peri! One ready made escape route.

(FX: THEY RUN.)

MOLE:

Don’t you want to know about the other settings?

PERI:

Another time, perhaps!

MOLE:

There’s your comical mode. That makes the victim laugh
themselves to death. Very nasty. Pastoral you choke to
death on grass. Probably worse than tragical if you want my
opinion.

PERI:

I didn’t!

DOCTOR:

Peri, that bulkhead, by that gantry...

(FX: BLAST)

DOCTOR:

Thank you. Through there.

(FX. MORE RUNNING.)

DOCTOR:

And what about historical?

PERI:

Are you actually listening to him?

DOCTOR:

Of course I'm listening. What about historical?

MOLE:

That's for escaping prisoners. That sends them back in time three hours, to the place they used to be, e.g. back in this cage. They used that one on me.

(FX: THEY RUN INTO THE TUNNELS.)

DOCTOR:

Interesting...

(FX: CORDELIA AND IAGO. RUN TO THE TUNNELS)

CORDELIA:

They have eluded us...

IAGO:

Not so, Cordelia. Bring out the witch hag soothsayer woman. She will seek them out.

SCENE 11: INT. TUNNELS.

(FX: VERY ECHOEY.)

(FX: MORE RUNNING)

WITCH:

(MUTTERING AND CACKLING IN BACKGROUND)

CORDELIA:

I cannot see them anymore.

IAGO:

Faith, Cordelia, see, the mad crone is having a vision.

WITCH:

(CACKLES) I see them. By the pricking of my toe, down the lower galleries they do go.

IAGO:

The lower galleries! Onward!

(MORE RUNNING.)

WITCH:

By the pricking of my feet, the intersection between level K and blue chamber, just down by the abandoned ore refinery up on the viewing platform with the rusty chain... They do meet.

CORDELIA:

Level K! Just down here... I can see them!

IAGO:

There! Stop accursed villains!

(

FX: BLASTS.)

CORDELIA:

Come out from behind there. There is no escape that way!

(PERSPECTIVE MOVES TO PERI, MOLE AND THE DOCTOR)

PERI:

Damnit. We're cornered.

(FX: PERI BLASTS AT ROCK WALL.)

PERI:

And this gun can't punch through solid rock. Any ideas?

MOLE:

Give ourselves up?

PERI:

Any other ideas? There's got to be a way out. Wait. What are they doing? They're staring and pointing over there...

CORDELIA:

Wait! See Iago! Were it not mine eyes I would think it impossible! Those trees... They are moving!

IAGO:

I do not believe this!

WITCH!

See, see, the Dark Forest doth come to Dunsinane! (LAUGHS MADLY)

PERI:

Doctor. That forest is moving... Look at those branches.

DOCTOR:

They're not branches! They're antlers! Of course! Come on!

(FX: THEY RUN.)

MOLE:

Ratty! Toad!

RATTY:

Mole!

TOAD:

You escaped! I can't believe it!

MOLE:

I only got free with these good people's help.

RATTY:

Thank you, kind lady. Thank you. Thank you for liberating my friend. When we get back to the surface I will make you some acorn jam.

PERI:

That sounds... lovely.

TOAD:

Come on Moley! Come on everyone! It's time to make a stand. Our friend here is going to free us!

(FX: CHEERS FROM ANIMALS.)

DOCTOR:

Good day to you, sir. Rudolf the red nosed reindeer I assume?

RUDI:

What gave it away? It was the nose wasn't it?

DOCTOR:

I want to say 'it wasn't the nose', but..., yes, it was the nose'.

RUDI:

Who are you people?

DOCTOR:

This is Peri. I'm the Doctor. I'm just a traveller - and part time Father Christmas impersonator. I found this outfit on a dead Santa in the tunnels. He had been struck by a circular blunt instrument. Something like the hooves of a reindeer?

RUDI:

You're a clever man, Doctor.

PERI:

Oh, you don't know the half of it.

DOCTOR:

Let me give you another example of my cleverness. You realised if they requested a Santa to rule on this religious dispute, he'd bring seven reindeer as part of his entourage. What Father Christmas wouldn't?

PERI:

Oh I get it. And if they kill that Santa...

DOCTOR:

Earth will send another Santa with another seven reindeer. And If they kill that one they get twenty-one reindeer here. And the balance of numbers tips in the animals favour. It's they who'll be the dominant faith on Naxios.

RUDI:

I don't have time for chat. Come on everyone. Time to end this.

DOCTOR:

Rudolph! I can help you. You're going to have to find another way. This isn't going to work.

RUDI:

It already has. Carry on with your travelling Doctor, you're not needed here.

(FX: CLIP CLOP OF REINDEER HOOVES.)

(FX:SQUEAL OF SPEAKER)

RUDI:

(ON SPEAKER) Attention, Shakespearians! We have the greater number of followers now. Naxios is ours. Lay down your weapons and leave us in peace. According to CREED law we are the dominant religion!

IAGO

(SHOUTING) (OFF) And you did this by murdering CREED inquisitors! Dost thou think Earth will let that stand? We will send for a fourth Inquisitor. And I wager they will not look kindly on you.

MOLE:

(WHISPERS) I think they might be right Ratty.

RATTY:

(WHISPERS) If we surrender perhaps they might kill us quickly.

PERI:

Guys. Just stay put. We'll think of something. Won't you Doctor?

DOCTOR:

Think of something? Yes. I think I've an idea...

PERI:

There you go. He's got an idea.

DOCTOR:

(OFF) Stop everything!

PERI:

Doctor! Come back!

DOCTOR:

(OFF) I may have a solution to your problems!

IAGO:

Step aside Imposter!

DOCTOR:

Listen to me, Iago. We don't have to fight a holy war in this place. We can sort this out amicably. Come out, both of you and face me unarmed. Show some trust. Look, I'm returning your stolen gun.

(FX: THE DOCTOR KICKS THE STOLEN GUN ACROSS THE FLOOR.)

CORDELIA:

Iago, look he is unarmed. We should show faith and do the same.

IAGO:

For once, I agree. Let us show our hands.

(FX: FOOTSTEPS AS THEY WALK OUT.)

IAGO:

Thank you for our gun.

(FX: IAGO PICKS UP GUN.)

IAGO:

I see it is set on tragical.

DOCTOR:

A gesture. To show my trust.

IAGO:

I am a tragic character. There is no trust in me. Goodbye imposter.

DOCTOR:

No. Wait!

(FX: BLAST)

PERI:

He shot him. He atomised the Doctor!

MOLE:

Peri! Don't go out there! He'll just shoot you too!

(FX: PERI RUNS INTO THE CENTRE OF THE CAVE.)

PERI:

You murderers!

CORDELIA:

I'm sorry. But Iago is in charge of Treachery. It is his way.

PERI:

The Doctor wasn't part of your holy war!

(FX:TARDIS MATERIALISATION. DOOR OPENS.)

DOCTOR:

Hello again! Did you miss me?

PERI:

(ANGRY) Doctor! You scared me!

DOCTOR

I did say I had a plan.

PERI:

For once would you mind letting me in on the plan before you pretend to get vaporised? All the information up front?

DOCTOR:

Sorry Peri.

(FX: DISAPPOINTING ELECTRONIC NOISE.)

DOCTOR:

Sorry Iago. I think you'll find that the gun's powerpack is dead. I only allowed you one shot. So now we're all unarmed. Now we can finally talk and settle this.

IAGO:

But how can this be? I fired upon you.

DOCTOR:

I knew you would betray me, Iago. It's in your nature. I fixed your gun so when you fired it on 'Tragical', it was actually on the 'Historical' setting. You sent me three hours back in the past, right into the heart of my TARDIS. Thank you for that. Now if you'll excuse me I have a sermon to give...

(SHOUTS) Listen to me ye faithful! Tremble on my works, ye mighty and despair! I have in my hands several pieces of paper, that will completely change life as you know it. Yay, I have come down from the mountainside bearing these two plays from the pen of the great bard himself! This one is called 'The Triumph of the Shrew' A stirring Shakespearian play where the humble Shrew is honoured as the mightiest of us all, and this one, 'A Winter's Toad', the story of how a merry band of animals go to war and saves England from the French. These works prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that Shakespeare held our small furry rodents and amphibians in the highest regard. There go, Cordelia. Take a look. Analyse the paper and Writing. I think your experts will find these works completely genuine.

CORDELIA:

But... if these be genuine. We cannot use the creatures as a workforce. The mining will cease. This undermines the whole basis of why we are here on Naxios...

DOCTOR:

Really Cordelia? I hadn't thought of that. Better let them go then. Close the mine down.

CORDELIA:

But...

DOCTOR:

Let them have picnics and mess about in boats. They'll like that. Come along, Peri.

(FX:THEY WALK.)

Do you know Peri, I'm getting quite comfortable in the red velvet. Perhaps I should get rid of the coat and keep this ensemble.

PERI:

No, Doctor. I never thought I'd say this. But keep the coat. I've got used to it. Come on. Let's go.

DOCTOR:

What's the hurry?

PERI:

We have to find Joe, remember?

DOCTOR:

Oh, him.

SCENE 12: TUNNEL. DAY.

(FX: RUNNING.)

PERI:
Joe!

JOE:
Peri!

(FX: THEY HUG.)

PERI:
Thank god you're safe. Where have you been?

JOE:
I was about to ask you the same question;

PERI:
Joe!

JOE:
I was invited for tea with some animals in waistcoats. Okay? I couldn't pass an opportunity like that could I? Paul McCartney is going to be so jealous.

PERI:
You were meant to stay here.

DOCTOR:
Exactly.

PERI:
And not wander off.

DOCTOR:
They never listen, do they Peri?

PERI:
That's enough from you Doctor. I can wander off because I'm experienced.

DOCTOR:
Experienced at getting into trouble...

JOE:
Hey can you two stop bickering? I've got something Really Important to tell you. There's a load of little creatures

down here being forced to work in the mines. We've got to free them.

DOCTOR:

Done it.

JOE:

Already?

PERI:

Yep.

JOE:

Seriously?

DOCTOR:

Dear Joe. It's all very simple. If Santa can deliver all his Presents in one night, then I can certainly sort out who's naughty or nice in a few hours. Ho ho ho.

THE END.

THE BABY AWAKES

By

Susan Dennon

CAST:

DOCTOR: a time traveller.
PERI: a time traveller's friend.
JOE: Time Traveller's boy-friend.
BALAN: Head of Ishtar Institute.
CORDELINE: Assistant head of Ishtar.
JANA: Expectant mother (20s)
KREN: Expectant father (20s)
FECUNDA: Jana's mother (50s)
SHREELA: A semi-robotic mercenary.
PIP: Young person
DORRIT: Young person.

SCENE 1: INT. DINING ROOM.

(FX: CLOCK TICKING. LOG FIRE. DISTANT CAROLLERS.)

JANA:

Dinner is served.

KREN:

Pip! Dorrit! I won't tell you again. Come and sit at the table.

(FX: PIP AND DORRIT SIT DOWN. THE FAMILY BEGIN EATING)

DORRIT:

Look what Pip got me for Christmas, gran.

FECUNDA:

Oh. A snowglobe.

PIP:

It's alright.

JANA:

That's lovely darling.

DORRIT:

He made it.

JANA:

Did you?

PIP:

Yeah.

JANA:

That's amazing. Well done Pip.

FECUNDA:

Well it's the thought that counts.

PIP:

I was thinking. Darius is inviting a few of the guys around to his place.

KREN:

You mean his parents place.

PIP:

Yeah, well same thing.

KREN:

Not really.

PIP:

So, I was thinking I could go round there. I mean, we'll just be sitting here watching Elvis's speech..

JANA:

Tim, your grandmother's here. She's come all this way from Eurasia to see us.

PIP:

Drex's grandparents came all the way from Proxima Minor. He's going. (BEAT) Melia's uncle came from the outer rim of Alpha Centauri. She's going. He doesn't mind. He's cool.

KREN:

Pip! That's enough. The discussion is closed.

PIP:

There's been no discussion.

JANA:

Pip...

PIP:

There hasn't. He just said no. (UNDER BREATH) Idiot.

KREN:

What did you say?

PIP:

You heard.

KREN:

Right that's it. I'm saying the word.

JANA:

Kren, no!

PIP:

What word?

JANA:

Darling. Can't we talk about this?

KREN:

No, I've had enough of him.

JANA:

But I do like him...

FECUNDA:

Jana darling. It won't work if you don't both want him.

PIP:

Oh, say the scary word, dad. Like I'm scared.

KREN:

You heard him. He wants me to say it.

JANA:

But you're provoking him. You can't...

PIP:

Just say the word!

KREN:

(SHOUTS) Chuzzlewit!

SCENE 2: EXT. ISHTAR INSTITUTE.

(FX: THE DOCTOR JOE AND PERI WALKING ALONG A PATH)

JOE:

That sky... It's... so...

PERI:

It is, isn't it?

JOE:

Amazing. It's like a Led Zeppelin album cover.

PERI:

It's a force shield dome isn't it, Doctor?

DOCTOR:

That's right. To protect from the Solar Flares. Earth Government spared no expense. If you pay a million credits the artificial moon can wink at you on your birthday..

(FX: THE DOCTOR PRESSES THE BELL.)

DOCTOR:

Here we are. The Ishtar Institute.

PERI:

Do you think Shreela will be okay?

DOCTOR:

In the TARDIS? I don't see why she shouldn't.

JOE:

What could she get up to in the TARDIS?

DOCTOR:

Exactly. She'll be fine. (SHOUTS) Ding dong!

(FX: DOOR OPEN)

BALAN:

Mr and Mrs Smith?

PERI:

Oh yes. That's us. I'm... Mrs Smith. Peri Smith. And this is my husband Joe. Smith. Joe Smith.

JOE:

That's me. Joe Smith.

BALAN

I'm Director Balan. Delighted to meet you. Delighted.

DOCTOR:

My, Mr Balan, what a smooth handshake you have.

BALAN:

Sorry?

DOCTOR:

Your handshake. That's the best corporate handshake I've had. Firm, quick, with a squeeze at the end. Can we try that again?

BALAN:

Um... Yes

DOCTOR:

Exactly the same down to the last detail. I'm impressed.

BALAN:

Sorry. I didn't catch your position in this family.

DOCTOR:

Me? Oh, I am just their eccentric uncle, Doctor Smith.

BALAN:

Mother's or father's side?

DOCTOR:

Oh, definitely.

BALAN:

Well, come in please, get yourselves comfortable. Sit. Sit.

(FX: INNER DOOR GLIDES OPEN)

BALAN:

Ah Cordeline. Champagne? In the morning?

CORDELINE:

Well we have to wet our potential baby's heads don't we?

BALAN:

Absolutely. Take a glass everybody. This is Doctor Cordeline. She'll be taking you through the process. Don't hesitate to ask her any questions.

(FX: CLINK OF CHAMPAGNE.)

BALAN:

To the future parents.

(FX: THEY ALL DRINK)

JOE:

Hey. This is good stuff.

DOCTOR:

Martian Champagne. Circa 5831, Joe. A very good year.

BALAN:

Cordeline, are the Bleak family still here?

CORDELINE:

Yes, they are. They're in the nursery.

BALAN:

Oh wonderful. You'll have a chance to witness one in action. If you'd like to follow Cordeline to the nursery?

SCENE 3: INT. CONTROL ROOM.

(FX: ARGUMENT IN SCENE ONE, DISTORTED AS IF OVER A SPEAKER. THEY TALK OVER THE ARGUMENT.)

CORDELINE:

(OVER) This is Jana and Kren Bleak and Jana's mother Fecunda, and they are trying out two potential children.

PERI:

(OVER) trying out?

CORDELINE:

(OVER) Yes, don't worry it's completely controlled. They're free to stop at any time.

PIP:

(D) Just say the word.

KREN:

(D) (SHOUTS) Chuzzlewit!

CORDELINE:

Excuse me. They've said the safe word. I have to go in.

(FX: DOOR OPENS AS CORDELINE LEAVES. AFTER A MOMENT WE HEAR ANOTHER DOOR OPEN IN THE CHAMBER.)

CORDELINE:

(D) Hello everyone.

(FX: CHORUS OF HELLO'S)

CORDELINE:

(D) That seemed very enlightening for you all.

KREN:

(D) You could say that.

CORDELINE:

(D) So I'm guessing that's a 'no' regarding Pip.

KREN:

(D) Sorry he's far too belligerent. Always challenging me. That's not a son I can relate to.

CORDELINE:

(D) Jana, is that a 'no' from you too?

JANA:

(D) (PAUSE) Yes, I suppose... I did find him creative and kind.

KREN:

(D) He's a thug.

JANA:

(D) He behaved very well at your father's funeral, Kren.

KREN:

(D) He was eight years old then. Look at him at fifteen.

FECUNDA:

He just ruined Christmas, dear.

JANA:

(D) Hardly... Mother. But... You're right. If we can't agree about him, we might as well try the next one.

CORDELINE:

(D) I think he'll turn out very nicely. And we're keeping Dorrit?

JANA:

(D) Yes.

FECUNDA:

(D) For the moment.

JANA:

(D) Mother!

KREN:

(D) Yes, she's fine. We can keep her.

(FX: A DOOR OPENS IN THE NURSERY.)

CORDELINE:

(D) If you'd like to go through into our lounge there's coffee and sandwiches. And you can talk about your options.

(FX: THE FAMILY WALK THROUGH INTO THE OTHER CHAMBER.) THE DOOR CLOSES. CORDELINE RE-ENTERS THE CONTROL ROOM.)

CORDERLINE:

I hope you found that informative.

PERI:

Oh yes, very informative. Did you find it informative Uncle?

DOCTOR:

Very.

CORDELINE:

If you'd all like to come through?

SCENE 4: INT. NURSERY.

(FX: DOOR GLIDES OPEN.)

CORDELINE:

Welcome to the Nursery.

JOE:

Those kids. Their faces have gone. They've become robots.

DOCTOR:

Not just robots, Joe. Far more than robots.

CORDELINE:

Exactly. Please, take a look. If you bend down and look at its chest... There is a small viewing plate...

PERI:

Oh, yes I can see something.

CORDELINE:

Both incubator shells house a fertilised egg... Once implanted, a computer algorithm calculates how they will develop as an individual, both in looks and personality. They also feed in the personalities of the parents, how they'll interact with the child, so both nature and nurture are incorporated. The shell is infinitely variable. Look, let me show you. (RAISES VOICE) Pip, go to three years old.

(FX: ROBOT TRANSFORMS.)

PIP BABY:

Daddy?

CORDELINE:

(RAISES VOICE) Pip, go to fifteen years old.

(FX: ROBOT TRANSFORMS.)

PIP:

Go on say the word. What do I... Who are you?

CORDELINE:

Chuzzlewit.

PIP:

(Who)

CORDELINE:

There. We're at the dormant stage again. Any questions?

DOCTOR:

I have a question. Is it possible for the embryo to absorb memories from its experiences while in the incubator shell?

CORDELINE:

No, that's not possible.

DOCTOR:

You seem very certain of that.

CORDELINE:

I am.

DOCTOR:

But there are documented instances of people remembering their time in the womb.

CORDELINE:

Anecdotal evidence, Doctor Smith. It all falls apart when submitted to proper scientific scrutiny.

DOCTOR:

Well, If you're sure.

CORDELINE:

Quite sure. So there it is. We give you a chance to fully interact with your children at any age, toddler, pre-school, teenager...

PERI:

Where I come from, we call them designer babies.

CORDELINE:

Well exactly. Why worry about arguing with your offspring in future years, when you can choose a more agreeable child.

JOE:

Makes sense, darling. Takes the aggro out of parenthood.

PERI:

Excuse me, Cordeline. My husband and I would just like a private word with our uncle.

CORDELINE:

Of course.

PERI:

Come on 'Uncle' let's talk.

DOCTOR:

What's the matter?

PERI:

There was a thing we had on twentieth century Earth. A little thing called eugenics.

DOCTOR:

I agree. It's not ideal.

PERI:

I want to put it on the record. I don't like doing this

DOCTOR:

If you feel like that, perhaps we should think of another plan.

JOE:

Why?

PERI:

Because I'm not comfortable with this. Are you comfortable with having a child this way? Selecting one like a catalogue?

JOE:

Yes.

PERI:

Figures.

JOE:

It's just the way things are heading, isn't it? That stuff is even going on back in the 80s. The Chinese with their quotas. Did you hear about those families in India only choosing to keep their kids if they're boys? It's all part of the same thing.

PERI:

It doesn't make it right.

JOE:

Look. I thought this is what we guys do. We investigate. You want to verify Shreela's story, don't you?

PERI:

Of course I do.

JOE:

Then I reckon this is the best way.

DOCTOR:

Peri? What do you think?

PERI:

If he's okay, then I guess... I'm in.

(FX: THEY RETURN TO CORDELINE.)

CORDELINE:

Well are we ready to start? Are you all taking part?

DOCTOR:

Ah... Not me. I'm not one of your interfering uncles. I'll step out and let these two lovebirds decide for themselves.

SCENE 5: INT. NURSERY.

JOE:

You ready for this?

PERI:

Not really. I don’t know how anyone could be ready for this.

JOE:

Babes, I know this is weird. It’s doing my head in too. But you know. When in Rome and all that...

PERI:

This just feels very clinical. Meeting our own children.

JOE:

As the Doctor says, it’s just a computer programme...

PERI:

That’s easy for the Doctor to say.

(FX: CHIME)

CORDELINE:

(D) Hello to you both. Peri. Joe. Are you good?

PERI:

We’re fine. Aren’t we darling?

JOE:

We are babes. Just fine.

CORDELINE:

(D) That’s great. So what age would you like them to be?

JOE:

How about twenty-five? We could take them to Ronnie Scott’s, hang out, listen to some jazz...

CORDELINE:

(D) Sorry. I’m only authorised to go up eighteen years.

PERI:

Why don’t you advise us?

CORDELINE:

(D) Most start off with a scenario involving children at the younger end of the spectrum. A day at the beach, for example.

PERI:

Fine. We'll try that.

CORDELINE:

Children... Go to two years old.

(FX: WAVES, WIND. SEAGULLS.)

JOE:

So what do we do?

CORDELINE:

(D) Play with them.

PERI:

You heard her. Help the boys bury you in the sand. They'll like that.

(FX: JOE WALKS AWAY)

JOE:

Okay. Better not get the jacket wet. It's leather.

SCENE: 6 INT. NURSERY.

(FX: SEASIDE.)

PERI:

Hey darling, is that your towel there?

CHILD:

Yes.

PERI:

You go and sit on it and sunbathe. Daddy and Mummy want to chat.

CHILD:

Okay.

(FX: CHILD LEAVES.)

PERI:

I think we did pretty good there. They seemed happy with their sandcastles.

JOE:

Yeah. Shall we say the safeword now?

PERI:

I... can't.

JOE:

You can't?

PERI:

I mean... I don't want to. Look at the three of them, getting their pudgy little fingers all wet and sandy. Carrying their buckets and spades to the sea and back. I can't just stop this.

JOE:

We've got to.

PERI:

Paul's waving at me. Hi little one! We'll see you soon. You say the safeword. I can't.

JOE:

Okay. You ready?

PERI:

No.

JOE:

Will you ever be ready?

PERI:

No.

JOE:

Shall I say it?

PERI:

No.

JOE:

I'll take that as a yes.

PERI:

Look, Paul's coming. He wants to show us a crab. Say the word. Please!

JOE:

Carnaby.

(FX: SEASIDE ATMOS FINISHES.)

JOE:

You okay?

PERI:

(EMOTIONAL) I will be.

(FX: CHIME)

CORDELINE:

(D) Hi both, I hope that scenario was joyful and enlightening.

JOE:

Oh yeah. Definitely.

CORDELINE:

Before we pick another scenario, is there anyone you'd like to discard at this point?

JOE:

Well Paul was a bit aggressive with the bucket (and spade)

PERI:

No.

JOE:

Excuse me, we'd just like to discuss a few things in private.

CORDELINE:

(D) Of course. That's completely normal at this stage. Just wave to the camera when you're ready to continue.

(FX: CHIME)

JOE:

You know why we're here. We discard a child. The Doctor traces our DNA so we find out where it goes.

PERI:

Don't lecture me, Joe. I've been with the Doctor for a long time. I don't need a pep talk (BEAT) But having to choose like this... It's like... Well it's like having to choose between my own children. Only it's not a metaphor is it? I really am.

JOE:

I know it's tough. I'm feeling quite attached to the Sprogs myself...

PERI:

Let's try one more scenario.

JOE:

Okay.

PERI:

Thanks. (RAISES VOICE) Hey!

(FX: CHIME)

CORDELINE:

(D) Have you decided?

PERI:

Yes. Well, and no. We've decided not to decide. Can we try another one?

CORDELINE:

(D) No problem. Take as long as you want.

SCENE 7: INT. STORE ROOM.

(FX: DOCTOR’S FOOTSTEPS.)

DOCTOR:

Hello? Shreela? (BEAT) You can come out now.

(SHREELA COMES OUT OF HIDING.)

SHREELA:

How did you know?

DOCTOR:

I didn’t. I was looking for my own hiding place and I picked up your distinctive scent.

SHREELA:

Essense of engine oil.

DOCTOR:

I told you to stay away.

SHREELA:

Yes, I remember you telling me. I don’t remember the bit about me agreeing.

DOCTOR:

Why didn’t you do as I say? Peri and Joe are verifying your story. I’m setting up a DNA trace. I must say there’s something very suspicious about that Balan fellow. Very odd handshake.

SHREELA:

What if I give you concrete evidence now? Evidence that what I told you is true?

DOCTOR:

Then that would be a great relief. For Peri in Particular. Why? What do you have?

SHREELA:

Someone who’ll remember me.

SCENE 8: INT. NURSERY.

(FX: INSIDE HOUSE. CLOCK TICKING.)

PERI:

And Brer Rabbit said to Brer Wolf, I was born in a Briar Patch! And off he went, lickity spit, to his home to tell his friends what happened.

(FX: BOOK CLOSED)

PERI:

Goodnight Paul.

JOE:

(CALLING) Goodnight Paul.

CHILD:

Goodnight.

(FX: BEDROOM DOOR CLOSE.)

JOE:

Ready?

PERI:

Ready.

JOE:

Carnaby.

(FX: HUM OF CHAMBER)

JOE:

So we've read them bedtime stories, hosted a birthday party for Janey, and watched Paul join the scouts. The Doctor will be wondering where we've got to.

PERI:

One more.

JOE:

No way.

PERI:

I'm sure they'll be less lovable as teenagers. I'm sure it'll be much easier to, you know...

JOE:

Okay. That's a plan.

(FX: CHIME)

CORDELINE:

(D) Hello again. Have you decided?

PERI:

Not yet. We're thinking of experiencing them older. Teenage?

CORDELINE:

(D) That's fine. What scenario?

PERI:

How about Christmas day?

CORDELINE:

(D) Good choice. Most of our prospective parents find it much easier to choose after our Christmas scenario. Just give me a second.

(FX: SHIMMERING NOISE)

(FX: CLOCK TICKING. LOG FIRE. DISTANT CAROLLERS.)

CORDELINE:

(D) There.

PERI:

That's great. Perfect. Really festive.

CORDELINE:

(D) Every one ready? Children, age to fifteen years old.

(PAUSE)

JOE:

Hey! They're still just robots.

CORDELINE:

(D) We're making them into teenagers. It's a big jump for the algorithm. We have to feed in lots of stimuli, experiences, information about the world. It takes a while to kick in.

(FX: THE ROBOTS START TO CHANGE)

PERI:

It's happening... They're growing

(FX: SNARLING)

JOE:

They're growing a lot.

(FX: THE SNARLING IS LOUDER)

PERI:

They're... They're not human!

CORDELINE:

(D) What's going on?

PERI:

Can't you see what's happening? They're monsters!

CORDELINE:

(D) It's not possible.

PERI:

Turn them off!

(FX: DISAPPOINTING ELECTRONIC SOUNDS)

CORDELINE:

(D) The failsafes aren't working! I can't shut them down.

JOE:

They're between us and the door!

PERI:

Cordeline! The fire! With the failsafes off, does it work like a normal fire?

CORDELINE:

(D) What?

PERI:

Would the fire burn?

CORDELINE:

(D) Yes! With the failsafes off! It would do!

JOE:

Peri, you’re a genius!

(FX: JOE RUNS TO THE FIRE, PULLS A LOG OUT.)

JOE:

Go on, get away from us! Go on! Get away! Out the door!

(FX: MONSTERS GET LOUDER, THEN QUIETER, AS THEY LURCH INTO THE NIGHT.)

JOE:

Are you alright?

PERI:

I’m ok.

(FX: DISTANT SCREAMS.)

PERI:

Oh my god, those poor carol singers. And that man selling roast chestnuts.

JOE:

It’s not real. Just got to remember that.

(FX: CRACKLE.)

PERI:

They’ve hit the edge of the holo-chamber.

(FX: MORE CRACKLING. THE ROARING INTENSIFIES)

JOE:

It’s really making them angry. They’re really strong.

PERI:

I’m glad you’re happy that our kids are healthy.

(FX: MONSTERS TEAR THE WALL OF THE CHAMBER ASUNDER.)

JOE:

They’ve broken through - out into the main building. What do we do now? Cordeline are you there?

CORDELINE:

(D) I have to raise the alarm. I’ll meet you in the control room.

SCENE 9: INT. WAITING ROOM.

(FX: ALARM)

FECUNDA:

What’s that alarm?

KREN:

How should I know?

FECUNDA:

We should go. They can’t keep us here.

KREN:

Exactly. We’re free citizens and valued customers. Come on.

(FX: KREN ACTIVATES DOOR. HE WALKS INTO THE CORRIDOR)

KREN:

Looks normal to me. Probably just a drill, or maybe someone dropped a spanner (in the works)

(FX: HUGE ROAR.)

KREN:

What the... Oh my... Dickens. Fagin’s beard! No! No! NO!

(SCREAMS)

(FX: KREN SCREAMS AS HE IS DEVOURED BY THE MONSTER. SCREAMS ARE MUFFLED AS THE DOOR CLOSES.)

JANA:

Oh my Dickens! Kren! Kren!

FECUNDA:

Fagin’s beard. What was that?

JANA:

He just got torn apart! My husband. Oh Dickens! Why? Why did you close the door?

FECUNDA:

Because that thing would have got us too! I can hear it moving away. We’re probably safe now.

JANA:

Oh Kren! He’s dead.

FECUNDA:

Yes he's dead. That's obvious! He's dead and we're going to have to step over his remains to get out of here.

JANA:

Oh no! No I can't. I can't!

FECUNDA:

Get a grip. Don't let a thing like losing your husband make you lose focus.

JANA:

No mother.

FECUNDA:

You're MY daughter. You're strong. You can grieve later. We have something that's more urgent to deal with.

JANA:

Yes mother. Survival.

FECUNDA:

More than just survival. Survival is the absolute minimum. Kren is dead. Somewhere in this complex is a person who owes us a great deal of compensation. Don't let fear or terror prevent you getting what is owed to you.

JANA:

No, mother.

FECUNDA:

Now let's go and find Mr Balan and demand our statutory rights as dissatisfied customers.

SCENE 10: CORRIDOR.

(FX: DISTANT SCREAMS)

PERI:

(OUT OF BREATH) Cordeline!

CORDELINE:

You got out.

PERI:

(OUT OF BREATH) By the skin of our teeth.

JOE:

(OUT OF BREATH) By the skin of their teeth, more like. Can't you do anything? There must be a way to shut them off.

CORDELINE:

That's what I'm trying to do. Nothing is working.

PERI:

There must be something we can do.

CORDELINE:

Wait. There might be something... They're your children, aren't they?

PERI:

What do you want me to do? Go out there and sing them a lullaby.

CORDELINE:

Just listen. Your DNA is buried in the heart of those things. Even if they're monsters, they will at some level see you as their parents.

PERI:

Suppose on their planet they eat their parents.

JOE:

This discussion is over. She's not going out there.

(FX: GUN IS ACTIVATED)

CORDELINE:

As you say, this discussion is over. You can either let her go alone, or you can go with her. Your choice.

JOE:

Don't think your hoover attachment can scare me. I've been threatened by experts. Music executives. Lou Reed..

(FX: RAY GUN BLAST. JOE CRIES OUT AND COLLAPSES TO THE FLOOR)

PERI:

JOE!

CORDELINE:

I'm sorry! He tried to rush me.

PERI:

You killed him.

CORDELINE:

No, no... I've just given him a massive epidural. He'll sleep for hours. But none of us are going to survive if something isn't done.

PERI:

I...

CORDELINE:

He'll be fine. I promise. But you have to go!

(FX: PERI RUNS OUT THE DOOR.)

SCENE 11: INT. CORRIDOR.

(FX: ALARM)

DOCTOR:

What’s happening?

(FX: LASER GUN IS ARMED AND CHARGED)

DOCTOR:

What are you doing?

SHREELA:

I’m bringing this place down.

DOCTOR:

This is not what we agreed!

(FX: SCREAMS)

SHREELA:

As I said, Doctor. I don’t remember the bit about me agreeing. Now let’s go. I want to show you my evidence.

SCENE 12: INT. CORRIDOR.

(ANIMAL SNARLING)

PERI:

Hi. Recognise me? I’m your mom. Do you remember me? Do you remember? Do you remember the beach? We made sandcastles? We found shells and used them for windows and popsicle sticks for flagpoles. And we went into the sea and got some seaweed, and we made a forest to go around the moat?

(FX: THE ‘CHILDREN’ ARE CALMER)

PERI:

You remember... You do remember, don’t you?

SHREELA:

Down Peri!

PERI:

Shreela! No! It’s okay..

(FX: LASER BLASTS. ANGRY ROARS AS THE ‘CHILDREN’ LEAVE.)

PERI:

Why did you have to do that!

SHREELA:

‘Thank you for saving my life Shreela’, ‘why it’s no bother, Peri.’

PERI:

They remembered me. They were calming down!

SHREELA:

Sure they were. What were those things anyway?

PERI:

It’s a long story. Where’s the Doctor?

DOCTOR:

He’s here.

PERI:

Doctor!

DOCTOR:

Where’s Joe?

PERI:

He’s... asleep.

DOCTOR:

Asleep? Why am I not surprised.

PERI:

He was being heroic!

DOCTOR:

Of course he was.

SHREELA:

Quiet you two. We’re here. The control room.

(FX: CONTROL ROOM DOOR IS OPENED AND SHREELA RUNS IN.)

SHREELA:

Nobody move. Sit down and stay absolutely still.

CORDELINE:

What’s going on? Who are you?

DOCTOR:

Do as she says everyone, she won’t hurt anyone here, will you?

SHREELA:

I haven’t decided yet.

CORDELINE:

Who is this woman?

DOCTOR:

If I may explain. We landed here, in the vicinity of this institute and found Shreela wandering around outside the perimeter fence. She had obviously gone through some trauma, so I took her into my craft and I recovered what remained of her memories.

SHREELA:

I grew up an orphan, with twenty others, in a military base, trained to kill. My body was altered.

DOCTOR:

I believe she was one of your discarded children.

CORDELINE:

That's not possible.

(FX: DOOR OPEN. FECUNDA AND JANA ENTER.)

FECUNDA:

Excuse me. We have been the victims of a terrible family tragedy caused by this establishment. We demand to speak to someone in charge.

SHREELA:

Well look what the cat dragged in. Hello mother.

FECUNDA:

Pardon?

SHREELA:

Don't you recognise your little girl?

FECUNDA:

I'm sorry, I've never met you before in my life.

SHREELA:

Yes we've met. In this place. We played on a Beach. You watched my school play. You read me a bedtime story about Brer Rabbit and the Briar Patch.

FECUNDA:

Penny?

JANA:

Mother, you didn't tell me you came here, to the Ishtar institute?

FECUNDA:

Why should I? It's not compulsory.

JANA:

She's my sister?

FECUNDA:

Don't be ridiculous.

JANA:

She is, isn't she?

FECUNDA

She's no more your sister than that boy Pip was your son. This is completely unacceptable. She shouldn't exist and I'm going to sue this institute for trillions.

JANA:

But she's your daughter.

FECUNDA:

She is not. I picked you, my darling. And I'm so glad I did.

SHREELA:

Enough!

(FX: THEY STRUGGLE)

FECUNDA:

Ow!

SHREELA:

I have a question, mother dear.

FECUNDA:

You're hurting my arm.

SHREELA:

I don't care.

FECUNDA:

Fine. Ask your question. Go on. Ask it. As if I don't know what it is.

SHREELA:

Why her and not me? Why did you pick her over me?

FECUNDA:

(LAUGHS) You really want to know? Fine. What does it matter to me? The nativity play. Do you remember? You were the Archangel Gabriel.

SHREELA:

Yes. Of course I do. I was lowered on a rope as Miss Harper played the piano and year 5 sang 'while Shepherds watched their flocks by night'...

CORDELINE:

That's part of our nativity simulation! She can't know about that!

DOCTOR:

Looks like you were wrong, Cordeline. The embryo can retain memories from inside the shell.

CORDELINE:

Impossible. Romantic nonsense.

DOCTOR:

Listen to her...

SHREELA

(CONTINUING) I Remember. I was lowered from the top of the stage with the glitter in my hair, and a cardboard halo bobbing above my head...

FECUNDA:

...And I and your father could not have been more proud. But then you opened your mouth and sang 'away in a manger'... and it was the most awful sound I ever heard. People were laughing, but not with you, at you. And that is why we didn't choose you. Happy now?

JANA:

Mother... When I was in the nativity play. I sang that song... And you said...'That's more like it'. That's what you said.

FECUNDA:

And it was. Darling. You should be pleased. I knew we made the right choice when we picked you. You sang so sweetly. Not like her.

SHREELA:

You...

(FX: SHREELA'S GUN COCKED.)

DOCTOR:

Shreela, no.

PERI:

It's not her fault. None of this is anyone's fault.

FECUNDA:

That's right. It's not my fault. I'm just a customer.

(FX: DOOR)

FECUNDA :

That’s the man. Blame him, not me. You should have been destroyed. It was in the contract.

CORDELINE :

Balan. Finally. We have a situation.

BALAN :

I know. Don’t worry Cordeline, I’ll take it from here. Now everyone, this has been a difficult day. Mrs Smith, I don’t know what happened to your children, but they will be re-calibrated as human, I promise. Mrs Bleak... _
My deepest condolences about the loss of your husband but reparations will be forthcoming. As for the presence of this - other daughter - it’s obviously a terrible mistake.

DOCTOR :

Indeed? How do you think this ‘mistake’ occurred.

BALAN :

Well there have been groups that have broken into this institute over the years. That’s true, isn’t it Cordeline?

CORDELINE :

Yes.

BALAN :

Obviously on one such raid they stole an egg from the life bank. We can only apologise.

SHREELA :

Doctor!

DOCTOR :

What is it?

SHREELA :

There’s an army vehicle on its way. The battle computer in my head can intercept their transmission. (BEAT) They’ve had a request from Co-ordinator Balan. He says one of their drones has escaped and is here causing trouble. (BEAT) They’ll be here soon.

DOCTOR:

So. Not a break in, Mr Balan. You took those eggs and gave them to the military.

BALAN:

(BEAT) Alright. I did. So what?

CORDELINE:

You did what?

BALAN:

I did it for the best of motives, out of principle. To affirm life.

CORDELINE:

What? You're a life-affirmer?

BALAN:

Yes. We preserve life in all its forms. Life is sacred.

SHREELA:

Life? My life? You gave me to the military! They replaced my blood with liquid mercury. They turned me into a killing machine.

BALAN:

But you're alive.

SHREELA:

They made me a slave. Bred me to fight.

BALAN:

But you're alive!

DOCTOR:

Stop this. We're going around in circles.

SHREELA:

You're right. There's nothing left to say. So let's get to it.

BALAN:

What? Get to what?

SHREELA:

It all ends here. See this little red light by my left eye?

(FX: BLEEP)

SHREELA:

There's a camera in my head. Everything I see gets recorded. I've wired myself up to a satellite and I can upload it to every news network in the world.

BALAN:

You can't do that. This is a vital government programme. Wait until their representatives arrive. They can persuade you how important it is.

DOCTOR:

I'm sure they can. But no thank you. Forgive us if we don't hang around to allow that to happen.

SHREELA:

Standing by. Uploading in 3. 2...

BALAN:

Abraxas.

PERI:

She's stopped moving. What have you done to her?

BALAN:

Do you really think they'd produce an army of trained killers and not have a safe word?

PERI

She's completely frozen. (BEAT) She's not breathing.

DOCTOR:

Stop this. Balan, stop this now. You're killing her. You're meant to be a life affirmer. How can a life-affirmer sanction an act of murder?

BALAN:

I can't let her stop my good work.

PERI:

Doctor, what do we do?

DOCTOR:

Have to think. Something's odd here. Think! Mr Balan, You have a lovely handshake. So precise. More than human.

BALAN:

What?

DOCTOR:

How old are you?

BALAN:

What are you (going)?

DOCTOR:

Don't worry, I can guess you're about forty. Shreela's mother must have undergone her 'selection process' thirty years ago. When you were ten years old?

FECUNDA:

That's right! He looked exactly the same when I came here the last. I can't believe I didn't notice that.

DOCTOR:

I wonder why? I think you're an incubator robot, Mr Balan.

CORDELINE:

That's ridiculous..

DOCTOR:

No, all too easy. What would be simpler for the military? Create an upgraded incubator shell, and plant it inside the institute.

PERI:

Doctor, less of the monologuing. Shreela hasn't got long left, by the look of her.

DOCTOR:

What's your safe word, Balan? How do we get out of this little scenario?

BALAN:

You're mad

DOCTOR:

They must have put it in your programming in case anything goes wrong. Cordeline, when you came to work here, is there a word you were told not to say out loud?

CORDELINE:

What?

DOCTOR:

A word! Any word! Think! Time's running out!

CORDELINE:

No! Of course not!

DOCTOR:

There has to be.

CORDELINE:

I tell you there's not!

BALAN:

Of course there's not. He's (completely insane)

FECUNDA:

Rumplestiltskin.

(FX: BALAN COLLAPSES)

SHREELA:

(GASPING, UNDER.)

PERI:

Shreela's breathing again. I think she'll be okay.

CORDELINE:

Balan? Balan? Is he...?

DOCTOR:

Balan's left us. Turn him over and you'll see.

CORDELINE:

My god. You were right! His face... He's an incubator robot.

FECUNDA:

I remembered that word... All those years ago. They gave us a list of safe words that we weren't allowed to use. They were all words that you might say during the scenarios.

DOCTOR:

Like Christmas.

FECUNDA:

Exactly. Like Christmas. All apart from that word. Such an odd word. It stuck in my head ever since.

DOCTOR:

It's always the little things you remember.

PERI:

(SADLY, TO HERSELF) Like popsicles for flagpoles and seaweed to make a forest.

SCENE 13: OUTSIDE INSTITUTE. DAY.

(FX: BIRDS TWITTERING.)

JOE:

Oh wow. That was quite a buzz. I’ve got to get me one of those epidural guns.

CORDELINE:

I’ll see what I can do, Joe.

DOCTOR:

Don’t encourage him. So, Cordeline. I watched from my scanner. I saw the military vehicles arrive..

CORDELINE:

Yes. They did arrive. Too late though. Everyone saw Shreela’s broadcast. The scandal went round the world in seconds.

DOCTOR:

Good.

CORDELINE:

They’re ‘repurposing’ this place – their words – and disbanding Shreela’s platoon so others like her can go and find their families. I’ve been given carte blanche to offer them vast amounts of compensation.

DOCTOR:

And Shreela?

CORDELINE:

Jana was very insistent on bringing her new sister into the family. Her mother didn’t look too happy about it.

DOCTOR:

I imagine she wasn’t.

PERI:

(TO MIC) Cordeline. Can I ask? The incubator robots.. with my.. The robots. Did you find them?

CORDELINE:

They’re still in the forest, Peri. We are looking for them, but... No such luck as yet.

PERI:

I don't understand. Why did they change into monsters?

DOCTOR:

I don't know.

PERI:

Babes, you told me yourself you've been infected by half a dozen alien viruses. You've nearly been changed into a bird once. Perhaps there's something in your DNA that knocked the wrong switch.

DOCTOR:

Yes. I wouldn't put it as crudely as that but... It is possible.

PERI:

I can't leave them out there. They're all alone.

JOE:

Peri, babes. They'll be fine. They're robots.

PERI:

They're also Paul, Michael and Janey, and they're my children. They're *our* children, Joe. And if you can't see that, I don't know why we're even together.

JOE:

That's not fair. I see what they meant to you. But... Tell her, Doctor.

DOCTOR:

Perhaps we should continue this discussion in the TARDIS.

PERI:

TARDIS. That's your safe word isn't it, Doctor? Say the word TARDIS and everything goes away. Well sometimes it's not 'all's well that ends well' and sometimes Brer Rabbit doesn't crawl out of the Briar Patch and laugh at Brer Wolf.

DOCTOR:

I do understand, really I do.

PERI:

Just words, Doctor. That's all you are sometimes. A pile of words wearing a cravat.

PERI:

I'll be in the TARDIS swimming pool doing lengths until I think of my own safe word. Please don't come and get me.

(FX: SHE WALKS AWAY.)

JOE:

What can I say?

DOCTOR:

Say nothing, Joe. Just be there for her.

JOE:

I woke up this morning, had my breakfast, and I've met kids I've never had, and my girlfriend is grieving for the fact they never existed, and it's not even teatime. What happened?

DOCTOR:

Life, Joe. As strange and weird and as terrifying as death. It's life.

THE END.

**I WISH IT COULD BE CHRISTMAS
EVERY DAY**

By

Andrew Lias

CHARACTERS:

DOCTOR: A Time Traveller.

PERI: His companion.

JOE: A new companion. Pop star from the 80s and Peri's
boyfriend.

THE LORD: An elderly well-spoken man. A bit James Mason.

SELENE: His daughter.

ROBOTS: Catering robots.

SCENE 1: INT. TARDIS CONTROL ROOM.

(FX: CONTROL ROOM.)

DOCTOR:

I’m not pleased.

JOE:

I can tell.

DOCTOR:

This is the third time in a row the TARDIS has landed in the 59th century. She knows it’s one of my least favourite centuries.

JOE:

So where are we?

DOCTOR:

Readings say we’ve landed on a space station orbiting the Earth.

(FX: SCANNER IS OPENED. LOW MURMUR OF VOICES.)

DOCTOR:

There. Nothing interesting. Just people talking.

JOE:

It’s a party. Can we go?

DOCTOR:

What would be the point in going to a party on a space station, when there is a whole Universe to explore?

JOE:

Doctor, just think for a moment. Peri’s been a little down since we went to the Ishtar institute and what happened... happened... Surely you’ve noticed.

DOCTOR:

I’ve noticed.

JOE:

Perhaps a party might be something that she needs. You know. Have a drink, a few laughs. Something fun.

DOCTOR:

No. I know my Peri. What she needs is stimulation. A mystery. Some ruins of a long dead civilization. I know just the place...

(FX: DOOR.)

PERI:

Hi.

JOE:

Hi babes.

PERI:

What's that on the scanner?

DOCTOR:

Nothing important.

JOE:

A party.

DOCTOR:

As I said. Nothing important.

PERI:

Why aren't they looking at us?

DOCTOR:

What?

PERI:

We've just materialised right in the middle of their party, and no-one in that room is looking at us. They're just carrying on standing there. Talking.

JOE:

And drinking.

PERI:

Not even glancing in our direction.

DOCTOR:

No. They're not are they? A miracle of temporal engineering lands right in their laps and they don't even have the good manners to be impressed? We shall see about this. Come on you two.

SCENE 2: INT. BALLROOM.

(FX: SOUNDS OF A WELL MANNERED PARTY. CLASSICAL ARRANGEMENT OF CHRISTMAS HYMNS.)

(FX: TARDIS DOOR OPENS.)

DOCTOR:

That's strange. Nobody's looking at us. I'm not used to being ignored.

JOE:

I bet.

PERI:

They're probably all incredibly well bred. It certainly feels like one of those very expensive parties. Tuxedos and designer dresses. Silver baubles and metal Christmas trees. Everything is designed to look amazing.

JOE:

I have a question.

DOCTOR:

Yes, good, Joe. Excellent. Questions. They keep the information circulating. Fires up the synapses in the brain. What's your question?

JOE:

Who wants a drink? (BEAT) I can see from your faces you both do. Back in a minute.

(FX: JOE WALKS OFF.)

DOCTOR:

He has a distinct lack of curiosity doesn't he?

PERI:

You think Joe's a clown don't you?

DOCTOR:

No! Well...

PERI:

He is a clown. He makes me laugh. But underneath the silliness there's a very intelligent man.

DOCTOR:

He hides it very well.

PERI:

Like someone else who's not a million miles away.

DOCTOR:

Who? Do you mean me?

PERI:

(LAUGHS)

(FX: JOE RETURNS WITH DRINKS ON A TRAY.)

JOE:

What's funny?

PERI:

Everything.

JOE: Ok. Here you go... I don't know what these are, so I had to take a guess. So... here's something that looks like angry mouthwash for you, Babes...

PERI:

Thanks.

JOE: ... And a green bubbling cup full of goo for you, Doctor...

DOCTOR:

No thank you, Joe. Not for me.

JOE:

But I've got it specially.

DOCTOR:

And I'm very grateful. Truly. But I want to keep my wits about me.

JOE:

Oh well. I can always pour it into a plantpot. Oh, there are no plantpots.

DOCTOR:

No. There aren't any plants. Nothing organic. Apart from the Mistletoe above that door.

PERI:

Hey, come on, give us a kiss

DOCTOR:

Must I?

PERI:

I wasn't talking to you. Come on Joe.

JOE

Ah, it's a bit naff.

PERI:

No it's not. Come on.

JOE:

No!

PERI:

Right, if you're not coming.. I'm going to liven up this party.

JOE:

Seriously. Not playing..

(FX: SHE WALKS AWAY TO GRAB SOME MISTELTOE FROM ABOVE THE DOOR.)

PERI:

I'm going to grab some of this misteltoe and chase you round the room until you surrender.

JOE:

(CALLING) Really. Please don't.

PERI:

Ready or not, here I...

TANNOY:

(ABRUPT, AGGRESSIVE) Do not remove the decorations. Removal of decorations is not permitted!

(FX: EVERYONE AT THE PARTY STOPS TALKING.)

PERI:

(OFF) I was just...

TANNOY:

Move away from the decorations!

PERI:

(OFF) Okay, okay... I can take a hint.

TANNOY:

(NOW JOLLY) Thank you. Merry Christmas. Merry Christmas everyone!

(FX: EVERYONE IN THE PARTY STARTS TALKING AGAIN.)

PERI:

What was that all about?

DOCTOR:

Seems a bit excessive.

PERI:

To say the least.

JOE:

They obviously take Christmas here very seriously.

DOCTOR:

Welll that's just it. It's not Christmas. According to the TARDIS it's April the 12th in the year Fifty-eight sixty three.

PERI:

That's odd.

JOE:

Anyone want another drink?

DOCTOR/PERI:

No.

JOE:

Just me then. Back in a sec. (AS HE GOES OFF) What are those pink fizzy ones called..?

PERI:

See that girl?

DOCTOR:

What girl?

PERI:

The one by the punchbowl. The one in with the jet black hair and the red velvet dress?

DOCTOR:

Oh yes. What about her?

PERI:

She's staring. Out of everyone at this party she's the only one who's looked at us.

DOCTOR

She's not staring at us.

PERI;

To be specific. At Joe. She's been watching him as he goes back and forth. She stared at us when I tried to grab the mistletoe. But now? She can't take her eyes off him.

(FX: CHIME.)

LORD:

Excuse me everyone. Excuse me.

(FX: CROWD TALKING SUBSIDES.)

LORD:

Sorry to interrupt your conversations, but I would just like to take this opportunity to say a few words. Now I know things are not ideal. Times have been hard for all of us

CROWD:

(FX: MURMURS)

LORD: But I know in my heart of hearts, that good times are finally around the corner. After all, it is Christmas.

(FX: CROWD TITTERS.)

LORD:

Yes I know. But this is a special time. A spiritual time. A time of Christmas miracles, so I will offer up a quick toast before the catering robots come in with the Canapes. To a brighter future for us all. To Christmas.

CROWD:

To Christmas.

(FX: DOOR. ROBOTS ENTER THE ROOM.)

(FX: WILDTRACK IN BACKGROUND: ROBOTS IN BACKGROUND SAYING.
'WOULD YOU LIKE A NIBBLE?')

PERI:

Wow. Those robots. Look at them.

DOCTOR:

I've been to places where the dinner service is solid silver, but never the waiters.

PERI:

They're beautiful.

(FX; ROBOT WHIRRS UP TO THEM.)

ROBOT:

Would you like a nibble?

DOCTOR:

No thank you.

ROBOT:

Would you like a nibble?

PERI:

No thanks.

ROBOT:

How about now?

DOCTOR:

I said no.

ROBOT:

I thought you might have changed your mind.

DOCTOR:

I haven't.

ROBOT:

Would you like a nibble?

PERI:

You just asked me that.

(FX: ROBOT SPARK)

ROBOT:

Sorry. I’m overdue a maintenance check up. I haven’t had one in a while and offering nibbles to guests for three years can tax the circuits.

PERI:

Three years?

DOCTOR:

Are you saying this party has been going on for three years?

ROBOT:

Three years, eight months, nine days. Give or take an hour. We started in 5859. I’m rushed off my castors. But it’s Christmas isn’t it? Makes it all worthwhile don’t you think? Merry Christmas.

(FX: ROBOT WHIRRS AWAY)

ROBOT:

(TO PARTYGOER) Would you like a nibble?

PERI:

Three and a half years for a party? Is that normal for this century?

DOCTOR:

I don’t think it’s normal for any century. Nero had a few that went on for a week or so... but I’ve never heard of a three year party.

PERI:

Perhaps the robot is wrong. It did say it was overdue a maintenance.

DOCTOR:

Yes. I think I should go back to the TARDIS and double check the yearometer.

PERI:

That’s a good idea.

DOCTOR:

Wait a minute. Where *is* the TARDIS?

PERI:

It's gone. It was right there.

DOCTOR:

Come on.

(FX: THEY MOVE.)

DOCTOR:

It was here. You can see where it squashed that dropped canapé.

PERI:

Well it's not here now. Let's ask our friend the robot.

(FX: THEY RUN AFTER THE ROBOT.)

DOCTOR:

Excuse me...

ROBOT:

Would you like a nibble?

DOCTOR:

No. I'd like to know what happened to my property.

PERI:

The blue box. It was right there and now it's gone.

DOCTOR:

Can you tell us what's happened to it?

ROBOT:

If your box was getting in the way - and they classified it as property of a guest - most likely they transmatted it to the cloakroom.

PERI:

And where is this cloakroom?

ROBOT:

Lower decks. Keep going down. You can't miss it.

DOCTOR:

Marvellous. We should go and see if it's there. Perhaps you could drag Joe away from that woman with the red velvet dress and he can come with us.

PERI:

With pleasure

SCENE 3: INT. CORRIDORS BELOW STATION.

(FX: FOOTSTEPS ON METAL.)

DOCTOR:

Come on! Down here!

JOE:

Where are we going?

PERI:

We think the robots put the TARDIS in the cloakroom.

JOE:

Okay. So it takes all of us to find that out?

PERI:

Come on! Where’s your sense of adventure?

JOE:

I think I left it on the floor of a flat in Battersea Park

DOCTOR:

Just through here...

(FX: DOOR SLIDES OPEN.)

DOCTOR:

Look. There it is at the back. Hello?

(FX: PERI RINGS FOR AN ATTENDENT.)

ROBOT ATTENDENT:

Yes?

DOCTOR:

You’ve got some property of ours back there. It’s the big blue box?

ATTENDENT:

You got a ticket?

DOCTOR:

We weren’t given a ticket. We’ve just arrived.

ATTENDENT:

No ticket, no box.

PERI:

But it's our box. It belongs to us. It's not our fault no one gave us a ticket.

ATTENDENT:

Look, I'm not a jobsworth. But no ticket, no box. That's the way it is.

PERI:

That's not fair.

ATTENDENT:

Here's what you can do. You can wait until the party is over. Everyone will collect their stuff *with their ticket*, and if no one's claimed it, you can take it then.

PERI:

But this party's been going on for nearly four years!

ATTENDENT:

I can't help that. That's the way they do things round here.

PERI:

We will report you to... your robot supervisor!

DOCTOR:

Peri, leave him alone. It's just trying to do its job.

PERI

But what about the TARDIS?

JOE:

Peri, It's in the cloakroom. It's safe. It's not going anywhere.

DOCTOR:

Exactly. Joe's right. It's fine where it is. And we know there's a simple way to get the TARDIS back. Bring this party to an end.

JOE:

Seems a bit drastic.

DOCTOR:

There are three key things we have to find out. Why has this party been going for so long, who wants it to keep

going, and what will happen if we stop it? I'm going back to chat to the guests

JOE:

Good idea. Let's do that.

PERI:

Actually, Joe and I will stay down here to look for a back way into the Cloakroom.

JOE:

Oh. Great.

DOCTOR:

Good thinking, Peri! A backup plan. Best of luck!

FX: DOCTOR DEPARTS

SCENE 4: INT. BALLROOM.

(FX: GENTEEL PARTY ATMOS AS PER SCENE 2.)

DOCTOR:
Hello there.

LORD:
Good day to you.

DOCTOR:
I'm the Doctor.

LORD:
Really. What are you a Doctor of?

DOCTOR:
Practically everything.

LORD:
How very interesting.

DOCTOR:
And you are?

LORD:
I am... the Lord.

DOCTOR:
Really, and what are you a Lord of?

LORD:
Practically nothing.

DOCTOR:
How extremely interesting. Lord of nothing?

LORD:
Practically nothing.

DOCTOR:
But even though you have nothing, you're still able to throw this party?

LORD:
You think this is my party? Why do you say that?

DOCTOR:

Because you do carry yourself with a certain authority.
Like a host. And you did make a speech.

LORD:

I did, didn't I? But It's not my party. In fact, it's not
a party at all.

DOCTOR:

Not a party?

LORD:

No.

DOCTOR:

It looks like one.

LORD:

That's the beauty of all of it. Looks like a party. But not
a party.

DOCTOR:

Then what is it?

LORD:

I'm sure you'll work it out. You seem like a clever fellow.
I think you were on the right lines when your young friend
tried to interfere with the decorations. Perhaps you should
test the hypothesis a little further?

SCENE 5: INT: CORRIDORS.**JOE:**

Look, there’s no back way into the Cloakroom. It’s all metal walls.. We should go back to the party.

PERI

Wait a minute. Down here.

(FX: PERI’S FOOTSTEPS ON METAL)

PERI:

(READING) Engine and Navigation hub. They’re both down this way.

JOE

So what? It’s a space station. I bet in the future every space station has got and Engine and Navigation hub.

PERI:

But look, more decorations everywhere. Silver balls, tinsel. Loads of mistletoe over the door... to the engine room? This is real overkill. Why decorate down here? The party’s upstairs. Why would they bother?

JOE:

Suppose they were on a massive budget and they had too much money to spend. That was usually the reason for most of the weirder videos I’ve done. (BEAT) Where are you going?

PERI:

I’m going to investigate.

JOE:

Investigate. Always with the investigating.

PERI:

Come on.

JOE:

No. I’m not doing this anymore.

PERI:

Not doing what?

JOE:

This... Thing with you and the Doctor, always running around investigating. Poking monsters with sticks to see if

they're friendly. It's not normal. Look I came aboard the TARDIS to have fun. Try some new experiences. See a bit of the universe. It is perfectly possible to do that without walking into danger all the time.

PERI:

We don't go out of our way to get into danger.

JOE:

No? I did my bit for Live Aid. I travelled to countries and sat in the desert. I tell you what I didn't do. I didn't get involved in the militias protesting the communist leadership. I didn't find myself fighting in the civil war. I cuddled some kids, shot my video and went home to my little flat in Chelsea. It's that easy.

PERI:

Joe, you know It's a bit more complicated than that.

JOE:

It's really not. When did we last have a good time, eh?

PERI:

I... well...

JOE:

I'll tell you when it was. The evening before I stepped aboard that ruddy Police Box.

PERI:

That's not true.

JOE:

We went to the Gargoyle Club, had a few drinks, danced, hung out. Remember when we met? I was doing Top of the Pops, and you were dancing in the audience. Why were you there?

PERI:

You know why I was there.

JOE:

Why?

PERI:

The Doctor was helping Colonel Crichton with some UNIT business in Derbyshire, and I was left in London. So I had some time to kill.

JOE:

No. That's not the reason. The reason is, you wanted to have fun. And you can't have fun while the Doctor is around.

PERI:

That's ridiculous.

JOE:

You can travel the universe without being scared all the time. It is possible. Truth is, the Doctor doesn't want to do that. And neither do you.

PERI:

What's this about? There's something you're not saying.

JOE:

I've just been thinking about, you know. Stopping here.

PERI:

Here? In the party???

JOE:

No! Not the party! In the 59th century. It's a crazy place. Like being inside a Beatles cartoon. Everyone worshipping all kinds of stuff. It makes sense, you know? Hey, you know, I checked the TARDIS database and there's even a bunch of people down on Earth who worship me. Just imagine the looks on their faces when I turn up.

PERI:

God. I'm so stupid. It's that girl isn't it?

JOE:

What girl?

PERI:

That girl in the red velvet dress.

JOE:

Her? The one in the party?

PERI:

Don't act dumb. We both know you're not dumb.

JOE:

What about her?

PERI:

I’m such a fool. I should know by now. This is how it always happens. Things get a bit complicated and guys like you run to the next one. You’re not saying that life in the TARDIS isn’t fun. You’re saying I’M not fun.

JOE:

That’s not what I’m saying. I want you to come with me. You and me. Having a real life with real kids. Go on life’s great adventure

PERI:

I... Wait... I can’t do that.

JOE:

You see? You mope about kids but you won’t commit to a life where you can actually have them.. You just want to carry on with the Doctor, throwing yourself into danger like an adrenaline junkie for no reason.

PERI

But. Wait... Stop... There’s reasons. There’s a good reason why we do what we do. We do a lot of good. You saw yourself. We freed the slaves on Naxios... We shut down the Ishtar institute..

JOE:

So you think you and the Doctor do good.

PERI:

Yes, we do.

JOE:

Peri. Babes. The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

PERI:

What’s that supposed to mean?

JOE:

I mean... Okay I didn’t mean that. That’s not what I meant. What I mean is, there’s always another load of slaves, another dodgy institute. The difference you make is... in relation to the whole Universe... What is it? A pin on the head of a pin. Nothing changes.

(FX: PERI’S FOOTSTEPS AWAY.)

PERI:

(CALLING) You're wrong.

JOE:

(RAISING VOICE) You will die some day at the hands of a monster. And nothing will change. (SHOUTING) Hey, where are you going? Babes!

PERI:

(CALLING BACK) Investigating. If you don't want to do this, you'd better go back to the ballroom. When we get the TARDIS back you can collect your stuff, pick up your velvet girlfriend and go and get worshipped. Because it's all you're good at! (BEAT) And stop calling me babes! I hate it!

SCENE 6: INT. BALLROOM

(FX: SEDATE PARTY ATMOS.)

DOCTOR:

(TO HIMSELF) Alright my Lord. If you say I'm on the right track, let's try a little experiment..

(FX: THE DOCTOR STARTS PULLING AWAY AT THE MISTELTOE.)

TANNOY:

Do not remove the decorations. Removal of the decorations is not permitted!

DOCTOR:

Don't mind me.

TANNOY:

Do not remove the decorations! Stop!

DOCTOR:

Just a small piece. You won't even notice it's gone.

TANNOY:

Action will be taken!

(FX: WHIRRING)

ROBOT 2:

The decorations must not be tampered with.

(FX: WHIRRING NOISE FROM THE ROBOT AS IT PRODUCES A WEAPON.)

ROBOT 2:

Lethal force will be employed if you persist.

DOCTOR:

Alright, Mr shiny. I can take a hint. Look, I'm backing away. Off I go.

(FX: WHIRRING NOISE AS ROBOT RETRACTS THE WEAPON.)

ROBOT 2:

Thank you. Merry Christmas.

(FX: DOCTOR MOVES AWAY FROM THE ROBOT.)

ROBOT:

(IN DISTANCE) Decorations are not to be tampered with.
Merry Christmas

(FX: DOCTOR MOVES TO LORD.)

LORD:

So Doctor, have you made your deduction?

DOCTOR:

That silver spike coming out of that robot nearly impaled me. Not the kind of thing you expect to be fitted to a catering robot handing out canapés.

LORD:

Quite.

DOCTOR:

These robots are not servants. They're warders. And you're not guests. You're prisoners. This isn't a party. It's a prison.

LORD:

Well done, Doctor. I knew you'd get it in the end.

SCENE 7: WOMEN’S BATHROOMS. INT.

(FX: TOILET ACOUSTiCS.)

(FX: SELENE’S VOICE IS MUFFLED.)

SELENE:

Hello, are you alright in there?

PERI:

(SNUFFLING) Yes. No.

SELENE:

I’m sorry, but you have to come out.

PERI:

Why?

SELENE:

That’s my stall for crying in. You have to use the next one.

(FX: LATCH)

PERI:

Hi.

(SELENE IS UNMUFFLED.)

SELENE:

Hi. I’m Selene.

PERI:

Peri. Hi. I like your dress.

SELENE:

Thanks.

PERI:

I wish I could wear red velvet.

SELENE:

With your colouring? I’m sure you can.

PERI:

No not really. Oh, I can do burgundy, the autumn colours, but bright red just bleeds the colour out of my face.

(BEAT) Just gotta tell you... Just between you and me. Your mascara has turned you into a panda.

SELENE:

In the interests of full disclosure. I have to let you know... Your mascara has given you a handlebar moustache.

PERI:

(LAUGH) Well at least we're keeping up the tradition of women blubbing in bathrooms at parties.

SELENE:

I'll drink to that. What are you in here for?

PERI:

Oh nothing. A guy.

SELENE:

Yeah obviously a guy. But give me specifics.

PERI:

Just a guy with a stupid mouth. How about your guy?

SELENE:

He's not my guy.

PERI:

Oh, one of 'those' situations.

SELENE:

No, not one of 'those' situations, believe it or not. It's so weird. I wasn't even interested in him. He wasn't dumping me. But he still made me cry. That new guy with the jacket? He reminded me of my brother. I haven't seen him for so long now.

PERI

Oh.

SELENE:

I just wanted to hug him, just to pretend my brother was back with me.

PERI:

Oh. I get that..

SELENE:

And what about you? Tell me about your guy so I can tell you he's not worth it.

PERI:

Maybe he is worth it. Maybe I overreacted. He just asked me something, and I think I let a lot of other things get in the way. Perhaps I've been wrong for a long time now. Perhaps I should think about changing my answer.

SELENE:

Well that's sorted. Only takes fifteen minutes in a bathroom to sort everything out.

SCENE 8 : INT. BALLROOM.

(FX: PARTY.)

LORD:

I upset the wrong people back on Earth, Doctor, just like all the guests. I thought I could break the mould of politics. I created a new political party and in turn they created a party to imprison me. Irony is not in short supply on Earth.

DOCTOR:

So what happened?

LORD:

Three years ago, I was invited to this party. Once we all got here and handed in our coats, the airlocks closed, the shuttles left, the docking bays went dark and the Christmas decorations stayed up.

DOCTOR:

But why is it still so elaborate? Why keep this Christmas party going? This is pure psychological torture.

LORD:

I think the party was only meant to keep us here for one day. I think the government had plans to dispose of us quite quickly, but something went awry. Everything carried on as it was because the robots were programmed to keep us here and celebrate Christmas, and no-one’s told them to stop.

DOCTOR:

My TARDIS isn’t far away. I could take you back to Earth.

LORD:

Could I make a suggestion?

DOCTOR:

Please do.

LORD:

This station is in a geosynchronous orbit matching the orbit of the Moon on the other side of the Earth. If we can get to the engines and navigational hub we can move the station around the Earth to the Moon. There’s a medical station there.

DOCTOR:

That sounds like a plan.

LORD:

Just one problem.

DOCTOR:

The catering robots.

LORD:

If we can just disable them.

DOCTOR:

Leave that to me.

SCENE 9: INT. BALLROOM.

(FX: PERI ENTERS THE BALLROOM.)

PERI:

Doctor? Have you seen Joe?

DOCTOR:

(LOUD AND BOUNCY) Ah Peri. No I haven’t I’m afraid. Have you met my friend, the Lord?

PERI:

Pleased to meet you.

LORD:

Charmed my dear. An honour to meet you.

DOCTOR:

(INTENSE) Peri, where have you been?

PERI:

I...

DOCTOR

Never mind. Just act natural.

PERI:

What?

DOCTOR:

Act natural. Drink. Smile. Pretend I’m saying something fascinating. Which should be easy.

PERI:

Why?

DOCTOR:

Because this place is a prison, the guests are political prisoners, and we’re organising a jailbreak.

(FX: WHIRR. ROBOT NOISES IN BACKGROUND.)

DOCTOR:

Here we go. That Robot’s cleaning up. It’s picking up that bowl of half-finished Christmas pudding...

(FX: JUDDERING SOUND - UNDER.)

ROBOT:

(INTONE) Blockage in disposal system.. Blockage in disposal system.

DOCTOR:

That must be my coin, jamming up its innards.

PERI:

You put a coin in your Christmas pudding?

(FX: THEY RUN TO THE ROBOT. CRASH AS ROBOT FALLS OVER.
DOCTOR PRISES A PLATE OFF THE ROBOT)

DOCTOR:

Now what seems to be the trouble, old chap?

ROBOT:

Blockage in disposal system.. Blockage in disposal system.

DOCTOR:

Don't worry. Sort you out in a jiffy.

PERI:

What are you doing?

DOCTOR:

I'm inserting a little bug into his system, which with any luck should transfer to every other robot here in an instant.

ROBOT:

Blockage in... Block... Block blockblockblock.

ROBOT:

B.b.b.b.b.b.b.b.b.b.b

PERI:

Doctor, here come the other robots. They don't look happy. They've got big silver spikes!

DOCTOR:

Just a few more seconds...

ROBOT:

B.b.b.b.b.b.b Barbarbarbarbar. Bah. Bah. Bah. Bah Humbug!
Bah Humbug!

OTHER ROBOTS:

Bah Humbug! Bah Humbug! Bah Humbug!

DOCTOR:

Excellent. Now listen to me all of you! Christmas is officially over! Take way the Christmas trees! Remove the decorations! Clear away the dishes, stop forcing the guests to have fun and deactivate yourselves! This party ends now.

(ROBOTS CHANT 'BAH HUMBUG' AS THEY TEAR DOWN THE DECORATIONS.)

LORD:

Doctor, I don't know how we can thank you. Three and a half long years of incarceration is over.

DOCTOR:

All that remains is to get you to the moon station.

SCENE 10: INT. ENGINE ROOM.

(FX. THROB OF ENGINES)

DOCTOR:

There we go. All done. We will arrive in Moon orbit in just a few minutes.

PERI:

Great.

DOCTOR:

Soon be time for you, me and Joe to make our excuses and leave.

PERI:

Doctor, about us leaving

DOCTOR:

Just a moment Peri, I’ve reopened the station’s communications network. I’m just patching myself through to the office of the President of Earth.

(FX: ELECTRONIC NOISES)

PERI:

Can you do that?

DOCTOR:

I can do anything. I want an explanation.

(FX; STATIC RESOLVING.)

PRESIDENT:

(D) What the... ? Doctor!

DOCTOR:

Madame President. An honour to see you. But I demand to know what you’ve been doing here on Tate Galactic.

PRESIDENT:

(D) I could ask you the same question.

DOCTOR:

What?

PRESIDENT:

(D) What have you done? Our records show you are a good man. Why are you working with these creatures? Why are you helping them?

(FX: LINE GOES DEAD.)

DOCTOR:

The line's gone dead. We've lost communication.

PERI:

What's happening? What creatures?

(FX: SLOW, MEASURED FOOTSTEPS TO THEM.)

LORD:

I think I can explain. Actually I can do more than that. I can demonstrate. Come with me to the viewing room. We're all waiting for you.

SCENE 11: INT. VIEWING ROOM.

(FX: PARTY GUESTS MUTTERING.)

LORD:

Allow me to introduce my daughter, Selene. I believe you’ve met Peri.

SELENE:

Hi Doctor. Hello Peri.

DOCTOR:

Come on then. What’s going on here. Stop with the enigmatic gloating. Just who exactly are you?

LORD:

I’m sure you’ll work it out. You’ve already proved what a clever fellow you are.

SELENE:

Father. The moon’s coming. It’s nearly here.

LORD:

So it is. So Doctor, thank you. Thank you for preventing the Earth from destroying us. And thank you for freeing us from our silver prison.

SELENE:

I can feel it. I can feel it. I’m changing. It’s been so long now. (SHE CHANGES. HER VOICE BECOMES DEEPER AND ALIEN.) At last, I can smell the blood in my nostrils again.

(FX: ROARING FROM OTHER GUESTS AS THEY CHANGE.)

PERI:

She’s changing. They’re all changing! They’re all... Werewolves!

DOCTOR:

You.. You’re the Were Lords.

LORD:

Yes, Doctor, correct. We’re the Were Lords. (HE CHANGES, VOICE BECOMES ALIEN) And thanks to you, we are free.

END OF STORY THREE.

BRIGHTLY SHONE THE MOON THAT NIGHT.

By

Nev Fountain

CHARACTERS:

The Doctor – An alien time traveller.
Peri- His companion.
Joe – His companion’s companion.
Lord Lycaon – Were Lord with a grievance.
Selene – His Daughter
Ratty – animal
Mole – animal
Toad – animal
Shreela – cyborg mercenary
Janey – Peri’s child
Paul – Peri’s child
Michael – Peri’s child
Cordeline – a professor.

SCENE 1: INT. BALLROOM.

(FX: SNARLING)

PERI:

Were lords? What are Were Lords?

DOCTOR:

They’re Gallifreyan soldiers, Peri.

LYCAON:

You’re puzzled, Doctor. I can see it on your face. You don’t quite understand your role in this drama. How you’ve actually been working for us since Naxios.

LYCAON:

I am Lycaon. The first Were Lord. After we deserted from the vampire war we settled on Earth, in Greece in 1500 BC.

SELENE:

Over the years we became the stuff of myth and legend.

LYCAON:

We lived in secrecy on Earth for seven thousand years. Until they put the force shield up to protect the planet from the Solar Flares.

SELENE:

They shut out the moon.

LYCAON:

So we revealed ourselves, offered our expertise to help.

SELENE:

It was a mistake. They pretended to accept our offer, but they were too afraid of us.

LYCAON:

The humans made a plan. They would lure us here with the promise of a ceremony, to celebrate the scientific co-operation between our two species.

SELENE:

A Christmas day truce.

LYCAON:

Then they would trap us here and send a crack team of soldiers to kill us. Soldiers genetically engineered

from embryos.

DOCTOR:

The Ishtar institute. Shreela and her quicksilver blood.

SELENE:

Exactly, and thanks to you Doctor the soldiers were set free and the project abandoned.

LYCAON:

And the planet Naxios was to provide living silver, to use in weapons for these augmented soldiers to kill us.

SELENE:

But again, thanks to you, Doctor, the slaves on Naxios were set free. There was much rejoicing... And the special metal remained in the ground.

LYCAON:

But the Humans were still able to trap us on the satellite. Hold us in a silver prison with silver guards But the Time Lord saves the day again. He sets his people free. You Doctor.

DOCTOR:

Oh no. This is... Impossible. How could I have been tricked so easily?

LYCAON:

You tricked yourself. The road to hell is paved with good intentions, Doctor. Your happy go lucky insistence on helping out wherever you go... It was perfect for us.

SELENE

You exceeded our expectations.

PERI:

Doctor, are you okay?

DOCTOR:

Of course I'm not okay. Aren't you paying attention? If what they say is true, this is too horrible to contemplate.

PERI:

It's not your fault. They manipulated you!

DOCTOR:

They didn't need to. They just wound me up like a

clockwork soldier and watched me march into battle.

LYCAON:

Enough with your existential angst. Time for some fun.
Take him my brothers. Tie the Doctor up.

(FX: THE DOCTOR BEING DRAGGED AND TIED UP.)

PERI:

Doctor! Doctor!

LYCAON:

How are the ropes, Doctor? Comfortable? What’s wrong?
Cat got your tongue?

SELENE:

His mind is broken.

LYCAON:

No Selene. He’s thinking. (BEAT) Well If he won’t talk to
me, I’ll talk to you, Peri. In the next two minutes I’m
going to take over your planet.

PERI:

Fifty mangy old wolves to invade a planet? That I’d like
to see.

LYCAON:

Your wish is my command.

LYCAON:

You see, Peri. You’re cattle. Easy to control. I don’t
have to do anything. See that screen? Can you see all
those coloured dots on the map?

PERI:

Yes.

LYCAON:

All the religions of the earth in tens of millions. So
many different ones. Shakespeare worshipers, Elvis
devotees, Coffee fanatics...

(FX: BLEEP)

SELENE:

You’re live.

LYCAON:

(CLEARS THROAT) People of Earth! We are the Were Lords. We have lived among you since two thousand years before the birth of Christ. We are the ones you prayed to when you lived in skins and huddled around fires for protection. We are here, out in the open. As you can see, we have defeated your champion. In this time in your planet’s history, you look in vain for something bigger to believe in. Then believe in us. Believe in our primeval power. Worship us, there is no alternative.

(FX: BEEP)

LYCAON:

Fear is power, Peri. It’s the same the universe over. Look at all the coloured lights. Watch them go black. The peoples of the Earth are abandoning their little religions and they’re going back to worshipping the beast. Soon they will queue up to be sacrificed to us. They will take the force shield down and the whole of Earth will drown in its own blood. Anything to say, Doctor? Any quips for us? Come on, say something.

DOCTOR:

The Earth is resilient. It will survive. I’ve seen it continue. The spirit of mankind will endure..

LYCAON:

Oh boring!

(FX: LYCAON BITES THE DOCTOR’S THROAT)

DOCTOR:

(SCREAMS.)

PERI:

No!

(FX. ANOTHER BITE)

DOCTOR:

(SCREAMS)

PERI:

Leave him alone!

SELENE:

Why did you bite him? He won’t become one of us. The Time Lords ensured we couldn’t do that.

LYCAON:

I know.

SELENE:

Then why?

LYCAON:

I wanted him to be a bit like us, just for a time. Join the lower classes. Now. Peri. That silver Christmas tree. Bring it over here. Or he dies right now.

(FX: PERI DRAGS THE TREE OVER.)

LYCAON:

Take the baubles off...

(FX: PERI TAKES BAUBLES OFF. TINY SHATTERING SOUND.)

LYCAON:

Now it's nothing more than a giant ugly silver spear. Now Peri. Take it and stick it into the Doctor, under the ribs, through the heart on the right side.

(BEAT)

LYCAON:

I won't ask again. I will tear his throat out!

PERI:

I can't!

(FX: DOOR.)

ROBOT:

Would anyone like a nibble?

(FX: HISSING OF WOLVES.)

LYCAON:

Get that thing away from me.

DOCTOR:

(WEAK, SHOUTING) Peri, the Robot... It's rebooted itself and rejected my virus. Keep the robot between you and them.

PERI:

Okay!

DOCTOR:

Good! Now they're in their wolf form they hate the silver even more.

(FX: SNARLING.)

ROBOT:

Would you like a nibble?

PERI:

Not now, buddy. I've lost my appetite.

ROBOT:

(SLURRING) Oh go on. Would you like a nibbbbbbllllleeee?

PERI:

It's dying. The power's nearly gone!

DOCTOR:

Then Run Peri! Find the TARDIS. Fast return switch. It'll get you and Joe back home.

PERI:

What about you?

DOCTOR:

Forget about me. Run for your life!

(FX: PERI RUNS)

LYCAON:

(SHOUTING) You can't run from us, Peri! We have your scent. There's nowhere to hide!

SCENE 2: INT. STORAGE ROOM.

SELENE:

(OVER TANNOY) Attention. The Doctor’s friend is loose on the station. Father wants her. Find her scent. Seek her out.

(FX: JOE RUNNING.)

JOE:

Peri? Peri? Hello? Are you in here?

PERI:

I’m here.

JOE:

Are you okay?

PERI:

I’m fine. Where’ve you been?

JOE:

I was below decks. I was about to come upstairs when I heard those announcements. What are Were Lords? What’s happening? Who’s after you?

PERI:

I’ll explain later. We need to go to the airlock. There’s a shuttle docked there. It can take us to Earth.

JOE:

A shuttle? We didn’t see any shuttles.

PERI:

I saw one. Come on!

(FX: RUNNING STOPS)

PERI:

Here, it’s on the other side of this airlock.

JOE:

Okay, let’s go.

(FX: FOOTSTEPS)

(FX: AIRLOCK DOOR CLOSES.)

JOE:

Peri babes. There is no shuttle. That's just space outside. And, you've just closed the airlock door on us.

PERI:

Yes.

JOE:

Can you let us out?

PERI:

No.

JOE:

Can you at least take your hand off the outer hatch Control?

PERI:

I can't do that either.

JOE:

Erm, can I ask why?

PERI:

I know who you are, Joe.

JOE:

Do you?

PERI:

The Doctor isn't the only one who can piece things together. I can too. The way you wouldn't go down that tunnel in Naxios. You weren't afraid. It was because the tunnel had silver on the walls.

JOE:

That's crazy. Think about what you're saying.

PERI:

And our children, from the Ishtar institute. They turned into wolves. It wasn't because I had alien DNA. They had something else inside them. They had you.

JOE:

Okay, you got me. You got me. I'm a Were Lord. Lycaon's my dad.

PERI

I knew it.

(FX: BEEP)

PERI:

Hello, is that the ballroom? This is Peri. (BEAT) This is Peri.

(FX: STATIC.)

SELENE:

(ON COMMUNICATOR) Peri?

PERI:

I've got your brother, Selene. We're in the airlock. Release the Doctor and I'll let him out of here. I'll give you five minutes. If he's not released I'll blast us both into space.

SELENE:

(ON COM) What?

PERI:

Five minutes. Release the Doctor.

(FX. BEEP.)

JOE:

Get the Doctor free, and he'll be able to save you in turn?

PERI:

Yes.

JOE:

That's how it works, doesn't it? I've seen you and the Doctor do it loads of times. You're clever.

PERI:

I am.

JOE:

Not that clever, though. I still tricked you to get into the TARDIS.

PERI:

You used me.

JOE:

Don't feel bad. I've been planning this for centuries, babes. I've been watching the Doctor for sooo long. He let me inside the TARDIS so many times. I was a peasant that he thought he saved from the Witch trials in 1693. A wounded soldier from the first war that took such a long time to heal. I read those TARDIS history banks, Peri and found out how the Were Lords died, here, in the 59th century. That's when I had the idea. Only a Time Lord can change history and get away with it. So I just learned how to pilot the TARDIS from the secondary control room. Popped you both down in the right places, and you and the Doctor did the rest.

(BEAT)

I must admit I thought you nearly had me when I couldn't go through that archway with the mistletoe, but you and the Doctor love a good argument. Nothing sets you off like a criticism of your lifestyle. I almost thought you were going to leave after that, take the Doctor with you. I got Selene to go into the bathroom to calm you down.

PERI:

How could I have been so stupid?

JOE:

That's not stupid. Stupid is locking yourself in an airlock and threatening to eject us both into space.

PERI:

You don't seem very concerned. They'd better do as I say or this is the end.

JOE:

They won't do as you say. Because they don't believe you. I don't believe you. I've dealt with Humans for 7000 years. Your life instinct is too strong. You always act brave at first, but you always beg for your lives in the end.

PERI:

Well this human means it.

JOE:

Sacrifice yourself for the Doctor? Come off it. Now let's just calm down and go back to the Ballroom together. You know it makes sense.

PERI:

Stay away! I'll press this button. I will! We'll both go out into space.

JOE:

You've not got it in you. You won't do it.

PERI:

You just watch me.

JOE:

Peri, no!

(FX: JOE LUNGES FOR PERI. PUNCHES THE AIRLOCK DOOR CONTROL.)

SCENE 3: INT. BALLROOM

(FX: DOOR.)

LYCAON:

Now, Doctor, let us continue with our chat. (BEAT)
Selene! Get in here.

SELENE:

What?

LYCAON:

Where is the Doctor?

SELENE:

What. He's right over... He's gone.

LYCAON:

I can see that!

SELENE:

The ropes have been bitten through.

LYCAON:

I can see that too!

SELENE:

Where is he?

DOCTOR (OVER TANNOY)

(D) Good day to you, Lord Lycaon.

LYCAON:

Doctor!

DOCTOR:

(D) Puny ropes are no match for a Time Lord, Lycaon.

LYCAON:

(LOW) We need to find him. Find him now. Find his
scent.

SELENE:

(SNIFFING) It's not there. His scent has gone.

DOCTOR:

(D) Yes. About that. I did have a very distinctive

scent, Selene. But unfortunately your father bit me, and so my scent is now the same as yours and your family. Bit of a needle in a haystack.

LYCAON:

(SNARLS) Doctor!

LYCAON:

Find him. Tear this station apart. Rip it to pieces, and then rip *him* to pieces.

SCENE 5 : INT. COUNTRYSIDE.

(FX: THE BABBLING OF A RIVER.)

RAT:

Who's that over there?

MOLE:

She must have come from the wild wood.
Shall we say hello?

PERI:

Hey! Heeey! You two!

MOLE:

Goodness! It's young Peri.

RAT:

Well my stars! So it is!

MOLE:

(CALLING) What were you doing in the wild wood?

PERI:

(CALLING) I don't know. I just remember pressing a button and I ended up here.

MOLE:

(CALLING) Won't you join us? (TO RAT) Would that be alright Ratty?

RAT:

I don't see why not. (CALLING) Come and join us.

PERI:

(CALLING) I'd love to join you, but I'm being chased by my boyfriend.

JOE:

(CALLING) Peri, wait. Come back.

MOLE:

(CALLING) Run along the river bank! There's a road that leads to Toad hall.

JOE:

(CALLING) Peri!

PERI:

(CALLING) Get away from me!

(CAR HORN TOOTING IN DISTANCE. GETTING LOUDER.)

TOAD:

Parp parp! Look out ahead! Watch out!

(FX: TOAD'S CAR CRASHES INTO JOE AND PERI.)

SCENE 6: INT. COUNTRYSIDE.

JANEY:

She's waking up. Hey guys, she's waking up.

PERI:

(GROANS) Where am I?

CORDELINE:

She'll be fine. It's okay. You got hit by Toad's car. He's a terrible driver. But don't worry, you're ok. Nothing's broken.

PERI:

What? Cordeline?

CORDELINE:

Yes. It's me. You okay?

PERI:

What are you doing here?

CORDELINE:

I will explain. We all will.

PERI:

Is this heaven?

SHREELA:

If this is heaven, then someone's made a real screw-up with the paperwork.

PERI:

Shreela?

SHREELA:

Yep. Last time I looked. (TO CORDELINE) Cordeline. Earth's in trouble. Time to make a move.

CORDELINE:

Yes.

PERI:

This is too much. I opened the airlock.

CORDELINE:

And you stepped into here.

JANEY:

This is a nursery. A virtual chamber inside a camouflaged spaceship,

PAUL:

Its’ been built to hide from the Were Lords.

PERI:

What? Just who are you people>

CORDELINE:

A very good question

MICHAEL:

She wants to know who we are.

JANEY:

I didn’t picture it quite like this.

CORDELINE:

Tell her, you three. But carefully. Peri’s had a very hectic day.

PAUL:

Okay. Prepare yourself. Look at my chest. Can you see?

PERI:

There’s a... there’s a window?

PAUL:

That’s right. You see that little shape in there? That’s me. That’s the real Paul.

JANEY:

Remember when we made sandcastles on the beach? Shells for windows? We went into the sea to find seaweed so we could make a forest around the moat? Remember?

PERI:

It can’t be. You mean... you’re my children?!

MIKE:

It’s us. Hello mom.

PAUL:

It’s so good to see you, mom. It really is.

JANEY:

Hey Paul, Mike’s blubbing.

PAUL:

He would do. He's such a wuss.

PERI:

Oh my god. It can't be true. I don't believe it! (CRIES)
I'm so sorry. I left you in the woods. Why did I leave you?
I should never have left you.

PAUL:

Hey mom, don't cry. We're here now. Give us a hug.

PERI:

But how? How are you? How?

CORDELINE:

After you left I re-established the failsafes
and the incubator robots came back to the institute.
Thanks to Shreela's broadcast...

SHREELA:

Yay for me.

CORDELINE:

After the resultant scandal, the Government decided that
every egg left in the institute should be relocated to a
surrogate.

JANEY:

Unfortunately, with the DNA of dad inside us. Not a good
idea.

CORDELINE:

So I kept them in the incubator robots at a constant age
of twenty-five, which we discovered, by trial and error,
was an age where they wouldn't be affected by the
lycanthrope gene.

PERI:

Lycanthrope gene? Oh my god. Where is Joe? I want to see
him.

PAUL:

Dad? He's over there. We tied him to that tree. Used silver
chains. Better to be safe than sorry. Just don't get too
close.

JANEY:

You know how he gets.

(FX: SHE WALKS OVER TO HIM.)

JOE:

Hi Peri.

PERI:

Hi.

JOE:

Be honest, apart from everything, how are you enjoying the party?

PERI:

Those silver chains. Do they hurt?

JOE:

Yes. They do a bit.

PERI:

Good.

DOCTOR:

(OFF) Lovely day for a stroll, everyone.

PERI:

Doctor! Am I glad to see you.

DOCTOR:

Chains? Some kind of tiff going on between you too?

PERI:

Doctor, he's a Were Lord. He betrayed us. He was the one piloting the TARDIS. He did it from the secondary control room.

JOE:

That's me. Slap the cuffs on.

DOCTOR:

Secondary control room? I knew I should have jettisoned that old place.

PERI:

I'm so sorry. I brought him into the TARDIS...I feel like this is all my fault.

DOCTOR:

Don't apologise. We've both been manipulated, Peri. They exploited all our weaknesses. My tendency to get involved with the affairs of others, and your big heart.

JOE:

Awww! That's so cute!

DOCTOR:

But I do want to thank you Joe. You've just given me the answer as to how to defeat you all.

JOE:

(LAUGHS) I know you Doctor. I've been looking over your shoulder since the twelfth century. I know when you're bluffing.

DOCTOR:

Am I indeed? Peri, have you noticed that Joe hasn't changed into a wolf since all this happened? Why do you think that is?

PERI:

I assumed he'd been below decks all this time. So he hadn't been exposed to the moon.

DOCTOR:

Well deduced. When the Time Lords made Lycaon and his fellow Were Lords they offered them an almost unlimited capacity to regenerate. But with a few caveats. One, they were only able to regenerate from humanoid to vulpine and back again, and two, the process was only triggered by artron generators. Great unwieldy things wheeled into battle that sent a single pulse to initiate the change.

PERI:

So by that logic, there must be one in the moon.

DOCTOR:

Exactly. They must have stolen one and hidden it deep inside the moon, left it operating on a constant pulse. And it triggers a change on direct exposure. It won't work down here, but it does upstairs, through that giant window in the ballroom. Am I correct, Joe?

JOE:

You'll never find that generator. It's so deep. And how are you going to get to it with no TARDIS?

DOCTOR:

Who says I want to get to it? Goodbye, Joe. I hope we don't meet again.

(FX: THEY LEAVE.)

JOE:

(SHOUTING AFTER HIM) Doctor! Doctor! You've lost. We won! Stop it! Stop doing things! It's not fair! It's not fair!

PERI:

You won't believe this place, Doctor. Everyone's here. Toad, Ratty, mole, Doctor Cordeline. Shreela. And... My children.

DOCTOR:

Your... Children...?

PERI:

Yes. I know. I still can't believe it.

DOCTOR:

Well... this is a surprise...

CORDELINE:

Hello Doctor!

DOCTOR:

And hello to you Doctor. Of all the people I expected to meet in a cloaked ship attached to a metal ball hanging in space. Can I ask why you're here?

CORDELINE:

I took over the Ishtar institute and found out from Balan's file why the Earth government needed the mercenaries. Project Wolfbane, would you believe? After everything that happened, Earth didn't have the resources for a full-scale assault on the satellite. But the government did authorise a small force using a handful of volunteers from the programme who still wanted to carry on fighting.

SHREELA

(IN BACKGROUND) Ta da! Meaning me

DOCTOR:

Hello Shreela.

CORDELINE:

Then I contacted the Naxions who were happy to mine a small amount of the living silver for a handful of weapons.

RATTY:

Least we could do.

MOLE:

It's only polite.

DOCTOR:

Can I just stop you there. I thank you for your efforts, but this state of affairs has come about because of me. I cannot allow you to risk your lives on my account. This is something I and I alone must rectify.

CORDELINE:

Absolutely not.

SHREELA:

This is my fight more than yours Doctor. I was born to do this. Literally.

RATTY:

We want to help. We don't like these Were Lord fellows.

MOLE:

They give animals a bad name.

RATTY:

Absolutely.

DOCTOR:

Well, if you insist. I'm very glad of your help

(FX: CHEERS.)

DOCTOR:

I would be very grateful if you and your band of assorted cutthroats get all the Were lords into the Ballroom, while Peri and I scoot into the engine hub. And I think I know just the thing to help you.

SCENE 7: STATION. INT.

(FX: SOUNDS OF BATTLE. STRANGE GUNS. THE OCCASIONAL
UTTERANCE OF 'WOULD YOU LIKE A NIBBLE?. IT
SEGUES INTO...)

SCENE 8: BALLROOM. INT.

(FX: DISTANT SOUNDS OF BATTLE.)

LYCAON:

(SHOUTS) Selene! What's happening?

SELENE:

The humans have the special guns. The ones that fire the living silver. And someone's reactivated the silver robots. They're using them as shields.

LYCAON:

This is the Doctor's work.

SELENE:

What do we do?

LYCAON:

I'm thinking! (BEAT)

(FX: BEEP.)

LYCAON:

(SHOUTING) Doctor! Doctor! You're too late!

SCENE 9: INT. CORRIDORS.

(FX: DOCTOR, PERI AND PAUL RUNNING ALONG CORRIDORS)

LYCAON:

(OVER TANNOY) It's too late, Doctor! You have rewritten history and made us the victors. Whatever you're planning it's too late!

DOCTOR:

He does go on, doesn't he?

PAUL:

Is what he saying right? Is history set now?

PERI:

You think all this has happened as it should be?

DOCTOR:

Fingers crossed.

(FX: THEY RUN ON. UNTIL THEY GET TO...)

PERI:

Engine and navigation. We're here.

SELENE:

So you are.

PERI:

Selene! How did you know we'd be here?

SELENE:

Your boyfriend got free and sniffed you out.

JOE:

Hey babes. Is this one of our kids? He's got your eyes.

PERI:

Paul, be careful.

PAUL:

It's fine Mom, I'm not exactly tasty. And they're just human down here. We've got the numbers. Two to three. We can rush them.

SELENE:

Your son's right, Joe. We can't see the moon. Better do something about that.

(FX: HUGE LASER SHOT BLASTS. BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! — UNDER)

DOCTOR:

We have to stop them! They're blasting through the hull so they can see the moon! They'll cause a (breach)

(FX: SUDDEN HOWLING OF WIND. MIXED WITH HOWLING OF WOLVES—UNDER.)

PAUL:

(SHOUTING) Mom! Grab my hand!

PERI:

(SHOUTING.) They're changing! Doctor!

PAUL:

Mom. I'm going to try something. Hang on to this pipe...

PERI:

Paul! No, what are you...

(FX: WIND SHUTS OFF.)

JOE:

What's happened. Where's the moon gone?

SELENE:

Your son has plugged himself in the hole. I thought he was family.

JOE:

Well blast him then.

PERI:

Paul!

PAUL:

Mom, don't worry about me! My body's artificial! Grab my gun! Quickly...

(FX: PERI SCRAMBLES FOR THE GUN.)

SELENE

Stop her!

JOE:

Come on Peri, you can't do this to me. We've got history.

PERI:

Yeah? Well history's changing.

(FX: GUNSHOTS. THERE IS A STRANGE SLURPING, AS THE LIVING SILVER COVERS AND SUFFOCATES THEM.)

SELENE:

(LONG DRAWN OUT CRY) Can't... breathe.

JOE:

(CRIES) Help me... Help... Babes...

PERI:

I'm not your babes.

(FX: THEY DIE.)

PERI:

Doctor. Are you alright?

DOCTOR:

I will be. In the nick of time. Thank you Paul.

PAUL:

Just hurry. There's a lot of suction. I can't hold on for ever...

SCENE 10: BALLROOM. INT. DAY.

(FX: SNARLING. THE OCCASIONAL ‘WOULD YOU LIKE A NIBBLE?)

DOCTOR:

(OVER TANNON.) You know Lycaon. I’ve been doing some thinking.

LYCAON:

Doctor!

DOCTOR:

If you turn your monitor to the engine and navigation hub we can talk face to face.

(FX: BLEEP.)

DOCTOR:

There you are. As you can see I have my hands on the navigational controls of his station.

LYCAON:

So what are you going to do? Steer us away from the moon so we change back into human form?

DOCTOR:

Nothing so drastic. I think I’ll give the gyroscope a good tweak...

(FX: STATION’S ENGINES FLUCTUATE.)

DOCTOR:

... Get a bit of a spin going.

LYCAON:

What are you doing? What’s happening?

DOCTOR:

It’s the moon that makes you change. There’s the moon. Oh it’s gone.

LYCAON:

Doctor... stop it.

DOCTOR:

Oh there it is again. Now it’s gone.

LYCAON:

Stop this!

(FX: THE STATION ENGINES GROAN, UNDULATING IN PITCH LIKE A WOUNDED WHALE.)

DOCTOR:

You're changing Lycaon. Back and forth. Faster and faster. How many regenerations did they give you? A hundred? A thousand? Shall we find out?

(FX: WOLVES IN PAIN.)

DOCTOR:

(YELLING) Round and round and round we go. Where we stop, nobody knows!

(FX: HOWLING BUILDS TO A CRESCENDO. THEN STOPS.)

SCENE 11: INT. ENGINE HUB.

DOCTOR:

They’re gone. They’ve all gone.

PERI:

Paul!

PAUL:

Get out of here, now. That spin. I can’t hold on... I’m...

(FX: ROAR OF WIND. CUT OFF WHEN THE DOOR IS CLOSED ON THE ENGINE HUB.)

PERI:

He’s gone. That was my boy. And he’s gone.

DOCTOR:

He’ll be fine. We can retrieve the incubator shell from space. He’ll be fine. Just fine.

PERI:

Can I cry into your coat?

DOCTOR:

Be my guest.

SCENE 12. BALLROOM. INT.

(FX: GROOVY CHRISTMAS MUSIC. BABBLE OF VOICES)

DOCTOR:

(OUT OF BREATH) Now, this Christmas party is more like it. I think I’ll dance with your daughter Janey. Shreela throws me around the room and the Mole keeps stepping on my feet.

PERI:

I’ve always dreamed of a proper family Christmas.

DOCTOR:

Me too. Well, I always dreamed of a proper family.

PERI:

I won’t ask.

DOCTOR:

Very wise.

PERI:

Cordeline, just let me know. They’re sending an Adjudicator as part of the enquiry into what happened here.

DOCTOR:

You mean we’re getting a visit from Santa as well? This is the best Christmas ever.

PERI:

So what happens now?

DOCTOR:

Well Lycaon was right. Power breeds power, but weakness also breed weakness. The sight of the Were Lords collapsing into dust means that their worshippers also dwindle back to nothing.

PERI:

I knew that stuff you said to Lycaon was just an act.

DOCTOR:

It was, partially. One can’t be paralysed by one’s choices, but I must always be vigilant when making them. Anyway, the results of our good intentions: to sum up, Earth gets infatuated with biblical solutions. The force shield is discarded in favour of an ark. Earth is abandoned for thousands of years.

PERI:

Oh.

DOCTOR:

Don't worry. The long winter will be endured, but for now, it's Christmas. After all, that's how Christmas started, a celebration to eat, drink and laugh in the face of the creatures of the darkness, and wait for the spring. Come on, let's have a go on the Karoake.

PERI:

Merry Christmas Doctor.

DOCTOR:

Merry Christmas Peri.

THE END.